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CLXIX

LETTERS OF ROBERT SOUTHEY

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LETTERS OF ROBERT SOUTHEY

A SELECTION

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES, BY

MAURICE H. FITZGERALD

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'WHAT a friendly soul, what a generous hand, what an amiable life was that of the noble Sir Walter! I will take another man of letters, whose life I admire even more,—an English worthy, doing his duty for fifty noble years of labour, day by day storing up learning, day by day working for scant wages, most charitable out of his small means, bravely faithful to the calling which he had chosen, refusing to turn from his path, for popular praise or prince's favour; —I mean *Robert Southey*. We have left his old political landmarks miles and miles behind; we protest against his dogmatism; nay, we begin to forget it and his politics: but I hope his life will not be forgotten, for it is sublime in its simplicity, its energy, its honour, its affection. In the combat between Time and Thalaba, I suspect the former destroyer has conquered. Kehama's curse frightens very few readers now; but Southey's private letters are worth piles of epics, and are sure to last among us as long as kind hearts like to sympathize with goodness and purity, and love and upright life.'

THACKERAY, *The Four Georges*.

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INTRODUCTION

'SOUTHEY'S letters show his true character,' wrote Walter Savage Landor. And it is perhaps for this reason above all that those letters deserve to live. They offer us a complete self-revelation of one of the most remarkable men of his day; yet a revelation free from the least taint of selfish egoism or of morbid introspection. They breathe an atmosphere as clear and bracing as the air on some Cumberland mountain-top. They set before us a character conspicuous for its generous affection, its cheerful devotion to duty, its quenchless enthusiasm, its disciplined strength. 'Few things,' wrote Southey, whilst engaged in reading over Dr. Bell's correspondence, 'are more impressive than to go through, in two or three readings, the hopes and the fears, the projects and disappointments, the good and evil fortune, the joys and the sorrows, of an individual, from the best years of manhood, till the series is closed, after thirty, or forty, or more, years, by a letter in a different hand, on black-edged paper, sealed with black wax. It made me forcibly feel how soon the longest life becomes like a tale that is told.' The impression is the deeper when we are reading the letters of a man of more than common powers and of true nobility of soul. Such a man has probably numbered among his friends some whose names have become household words; he has played an honourable part

in his own day and generation, and his conduct and opinions are full of instruction for ourselves; his countrymen—perhaps the civilized world—confess themselves his debtors; and we feel it an inspiration to trace his career step by step, to learn his views of life, to watch him in his joys and in his sorrows, and to be admitted into the intimate feelings of his heart.

Some great men have ceased to be natural as soon as they sat down to write a letter. They have at once become self-conscious and have begun to write for effect; or they have written with the deliberate intention of concealing their real feelings and motives. One great charm of Southey's letters is that they are so obviously unstudied and sincere. Here is a man, we feel, writing out of the fullness of his heart, with nothing to conceal and without a trace of affectation. He reveals himself to us in his strength and in his weakness; his foibles are made apparent no less than his virtues. We see how he bears himself amid the common changes and chances of human life; and, if few men have enjoyed greater happiness than Southey, few again can have been more sorely tried than he. We learn to know him as he was in his home, until at last we feel that he has almost become to us a living friend. To many readers nothing in the letters will be more attractive than the glimpses which they give of the gracious home-life at Greta Hall. How clearly they bring before us the father's patient regular course of unselfish toil, the long hours spent at the desk in order to win bread for his own family and for others whom in his generosity he helped to support! We mark him courteously bearing with the interruption caused by

the sudden visit of some 'Laker', and going forth with the stranger to do the honours of the country; or, a more welcome interlude, pushing out into Derwentwater with a happy company of laughing children on board that good boat the *Royal Noah*, bound for a picnic under Causey Pike. Or we watch Herbert, the 'child of Southey's heart and mind', fresh from a reading of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, playing 'Pollyon with his little sisters Bertha and Kate, to their mingled terror and delight. Or the famous coach-horn is to be unpacked—with care and deliberation—for the special purpose of seeing how Mrs. Coleridge will look in her astonishment when she realizes what was in the mysterious parcel brought from London. Slowly and methodically Southey unties the string, unbinds it round after round, and finally takes off the paper. How Mrs. Coleridge looked, what she said in her own inimitable language, will be found duly described by Southey, with his quick sense of boyish fun, in the account of the episode which he sent to Grosvenor Bedford. Many such pictures will dwell in the memory of any one who knows Southey's letters, pictures which it is pleasant to look upon, sketched at the moment with a few firm strokes, with no thought of any public beyond the persons to whom they were sent.

But letters, if they are to live, must contain more than mere pictures of domestic happiness. They must be commended by a lively grace of style; they gain enormously in interest if they deal with great contemporary events in history or art or literature, and if they are addressed to people who are already something more to us than names. So far as style is concerned,

Southey's letters can have few superiors. Like all else that he wrote, they are easy and vivid, free from any touch of mannerism. Their mere extent shows that they must for the most part have been written *currente calamo*. Yet long practice enabled Southey to write even his letters without any signs of careless haste. 'There are letters,' says Sir Henry Taylor, 'written by Southey in moments of absorbing emotion, which are as perfect in diction as if they had been works of art. In his case the words fell naturally into the mould made for them by habit.' All this makes greatly for the comfort and pleasure of the reader; how much may be realized if we turn from a letter of Southey to read one written by Coleridge on the same or some similar subject. In the matter of style there is no comparison between the two. Southey's writing is always perspicuous, lively, and direct, while the turgid verbosity of Coleridge at times makes the task of reading one of his letters suggestive of wading through glue. Again, Southey's quick sympathies give light and colour to his correspondence. He adapts himself at once to the circumstances and character of the person whom he is addressing, so that we learn through his letters to know his friends almost as well as we know himself. And no man ever had truer friends than he. Chief among them stands Grosvenor Bedford, a Westminster schoolfellow, the man to whom Southey can talk or write nonsense to his heart's content, sure that it will be welcomed and appreciated, and yet the first to whom he will turn in time of sorrow. Next to him, perhaps, comes another schoolfellow, Charles Wynn, crotchety, generous, and loyal, to whose liberality Southey owed it that he was

ever able to make literature his profession. John Rickman is yet another notable figure, with his rough exterior and warm heart, his strong common-sense and masculine intellect. The friendship begun with John May in Portugal in 1795 lasted through good fortune and bad until Southey's mind finally gave way. And for womanly sympathy and ready service Southey could always turn to Mary Barker and—in later years—to Caroline Bowles. But there are greater names than these. Among those who counted Southey friend were the noble-hearted Sir Walter; Wordsworth, who found in him one of the staunchest and most enthusiastic admirers of his poetry; poor Coleridge, the greatest genius of them all; the gentle Elia; Walter Savage Landor, of whom Southey wrote, 'I have often said before we met that I would walk forty miles to see him, and, having seen him, I would gladly walk fourscore to see him again'; and Henry Taylor, the one close friend gained in his declining years. 'There were giants in those days,' and Southey's letters, quite apart from their bearing on his own hopes and achievements in prose and poetry, abound in interesting references to men whose names are great in English literature or politics. We read in them his comments on Scott's last poem or novel, or his undaunted championship of 'The Excursion' against the sentence pronounced upon it by 'Judge Jeffrey' in the *Edinburgh Review*. We find him addressing repeated (and apparently unheeded) remonstrances to Gifford against the mutilation practised by the latter upon his articles in the *Quarterly*, or receiving a gloomy prophecy from John Wilson Croker of the *certain*

prospect of an English revolution. Now he is seeking an explanation of the apparently unprecedented sale of *Lalla Rookh*; or again he is interesting himself in the fortunes of the youthful Shelley, whose presence at Keswick 'acts upon him as his own ghost would do'; or he is preparing—at times with less discretion than befits the goodness of his cause—to break a lance with Byron in defence of the honour and purity of our literature. The age, too, in which Southey lived was one of the most critical in our country's history. His early manhood was flushed with the hopes kindled by the first promise of the French Revolution, and was saddened by the excesses which disgraced its course. In the best years of his life he was one of the most conspicuous of those Englishmen who set their faces like flints against all compromise with Napoleon, and refused to bow before immoral power. His later years were darkened by anxieties as to the future of the country, roused—though happily to be falsified by the event—by the great struggles over the questions of Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform. The letters of a contemporary who has keenly felt the hopes and fears of such times as these can hardly fail to remain full of living interest.

But, just because Southey's letters reveal his true character, they reveal it in its weakness as well as in its strength. No one indeed who reads them can fail to see the absurdity of many of the attacks to which he was exposed in his lifetime. To speak of Southey as the very type of a reactionary Tory is an abuse of language. From first to last his letters show a glowing zeal for the progress and welfare of his fellow men.

He consistently advocated the improvement of the condition of the poor by colonization at home and abroad, by the spread of education, and by the institution of savings banks, co-operative societies, and nursing sisterhoods. He was a strong supporter of prison reform; and Lord Ashley owed much to his sympathy and encouragement in the agitation which led to the passing of the Factory Acts. The other guise under which his enemies were wont to hold him up to ridicule—that of a courtly hireling, a mercenary turncoat—is a still more monstrous travesty of fact. Doubtless Southey was a warm admirer of the French Revolution in 1794. But in this he merely shared in the vague and incoherent enthusiasm of many generous and youthful minds. As he grew older and the evil side of the Revolution and its consequences became more apparent, his opinions changed. He was only one of a number of prominent Englishmen who were revolted by the excesses of the Revolution in France, and were driven thereby into an unduly strong sense of the perils of popular government. If Southey and Wordsworth were in error in their opposition to Parliamentary Reform, at least the error sprang from no ignoble motives. As page after page of their writings proves, they were no selfish bigots determined to maintain a class-ascendancy. They wished that all that was possible should be done to raise the condition of the people both materially and morally; but they believed that, as things were, the dangers of Parliamentary Reform far outweighed its advantages. On another great question—that of Catholic Emancipation—it is easier to understand their attitude to-day.

History has belied the apprehensions of those who opposed the Catholic Relief Bill. But it is impossible to feel, as we may in the parallel case of Parliamentary Reform, that at the time those apprehensions were unreasonable, or that there was not grave cause for fearing in the future an aggressive policy on the part of the Roman Church in the United Kingdom. So much may be said in order to clear away certain popular misconceptions as to Southey's political opinions. Yet, while his honour and sincerity are beyond dispute, it must be admitted that he sometimes provoked criticism which was not only natural but deserved. His later views were in many points opposed to those which he had expressed with the heady vehemence of youth. This in itself might have excited little comment; but the change was being continually advertized by the fact that he was a protagonist in a literary warfare in which hard blows were given and received on either side. Party feeling ran high, and in neither of the two great reviews—the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*—was it the fashion to deal tenderly with an opponent. It was natural for men who did not know Southey to misunderstand the change in his opinions; it was easy for his enemies to misrepresent its nature and its grounds. But he would hardly have incurred such strong resentment if it had not been for the manner in which he occasionally engaged in controversy. The high self-confidence which led him to attach an exaggerated value to his own writings rendered him at times self-opinionated and unconsciously prejudiced. His retired life at Keswick, where for great part of the year he could have

little personal intercourse with other men of culture and political experience, can hardly have tended to give him breadth of view. He himself admitted that on moral questions he was apt to 'speak in the very gall of bitterness'. The pity is that so many questions assumed a moral complexion when he found himself involved in a controversy about them. In the result he was intolerant of opinions opposed to his own, though very tolerant of the persons who held them, as witness his unbroken friendship with William Taylor of Norwich. So it is that those who do not share his views on certain important topics will find that in writing on those subjects Southey expresses himself at times in harsh and vehement language. This is particularly the case in his references to the Roman Church and to Protestant Nonconformity. Here it is impossible to acquit him of the charge of prejudice, though we can explain in a measure how that prejudice arose. He had seen the Church of Rome almost at its worst during his visits to Spain and Portugal in 1795–6 and 1800–1, and his historical reading filled him with the conviction that, where it has the power, it must of necessity be a persecuting Church.[1] Again, he judged of its probable policy by what he felt would have been his own view of duty to the faith, if he had himself been a Roman Catholic. His attitude towards Dissenters was influenced in part by long-continued political antagonism. But it was chiefly due to a deeply-rooted difference of temperament. The very

[1] This conviction, and the grounds on which it was based, will be found clearly set forth in Colloquy IX of Southey's *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society.*

strength of his own feelings compelled Southey rigidly to keep their expression under control. He 'covered them,' so he told Coleridge, 'with a bearskin.' He was naturally reserved, especially about the things which he held most dear, and shrank from the outward exhibition of religious emotion. He had a horror of any appearance of cant, and was prone to suspect cant even where it did not exist. It follows that when religious matters are at issue Southey's view is not infrequently narrow and his language hard and intolerant. Yet in reading his letters, even when we could have wished for different opinions or for opinions differently expressed, we cannot but feel the transparent honesty of the writer. Those who know them will at least understand the verdict deliberately pronounced upon Southey by Sir Henry Taylor, as he looked back upon their friendship across an interval of over forty years.

'If he expected for himself a larger measure of attention from posterity than may now seem likely to be accorded him, it should be remembered that, though as long as his mind lasted he lived laborious days for the sake of his family and of others whom, in the generosity of his heart, he helped to support, yet all the labours of all the days did not enable him to do more than make preparations for the three great works which it was the object and ambition of his life to accomplish.

'Of what he did accomplish a portion will not soon be forgotten. There were greater poets in his generation, and there were men of a more far-reaching philosophic faculty; but take him for all in all—his ardent and genial piety, his moral strength, the magnitude and variety of his powers, the field which he covered in literature, and the beauty of his life—it may be said of him, justly, and with no straining of the

truth, that of all his contemporaries he was the greatest MAN' (*The English Poets*, ed. T. H. Ward, iv, p. 164).

It remains briefly to describe the sources from which the present edition has been compiled. It will be found to contain no letters hitherto unpublished, and of necessity only a very small proportion of those previously printed. The mass of Southey's published correspondence is enormous, and is a striking proof of his amazing intellectual vitality. But this very fact has made the task of selection no easy matter. From considerations of space I have been obliged to omit a great number of letters which I would gladly have included. But I believe that the letters here printed give a sufficiently full and true portrait of the man who wrote them. They are mainly derived from the three following sources:—

(1) *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey.* Edited by his son, the Rev. C. C. Southey, 6 vols., 1849–50.

(2) *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey.* Edited by J. W. Warter, 4 vols., 1856.

(3) *The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles.* Edited by E. Dowden, 1881.

In the letters which they published both Cuthbert Southey and J. W. Warter omitted certain passages, chiefly in order to avoid mere repetition, but occasionally because the cancelled passage contained, in Cuthbert Southey's words, 'some free and unguarded expressions, which, whether relating to things or persons, having been penned in the confidence of friendship, and at the impulse of the moment, it would be as unreasonable

in a reader to require, as it would be injudicious and improper in an editor to publish.' I have naturally made no effort to restore any passage so omitted, and have throughout printed the full text of every letter as given in the authority from which it has been taken. In order to avoid disfiguring the page, I have followed J. W. Warter's example, rather than that of Cuthbert Southey, in forbearing to mark the places where an hiatus occurs by the use of dots or asterisks.

A few letters have been inserted from other sources. Letters 23, 26, and 41 will be found in J. W. Robberd's *Life and Writings of William Taylor of Norwich*; letters 173 and 174 in E. V. Lucas' *Life of Charles Lamb*; letter 247 in *The Correspondence of Henry Taylor*; letter 255 in Mrs. Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë*. I have also printed a few letters from Southey's correspondents; and I hope that, in every case, they will be felt to justify their inclusion.

Some readers may possibly be surprised at the omission of two important letters written in April 1814, with reference to Coleridge and the opium habit, which were published by Cottle in 1847 in his *Reminiscences of S. T. Coleridge and R. Southey*. Those letters have a painful interest in their picture of Coleridge's weakness. They represent the truth at the time when they were written, so far as Southey could know it; but they represent only one side of the truth; and it would not have been fair to reprint them without entering upon a fuller discussion of all the facts than is possible in the present volume.

The letters in this edition are arranged in chronological order. I hope that the Notes may be found to

explain them sufficiently, where explanation is required. As some substitute for an index I have reprinted the Biographical Table from my edition of Southey's Poems in the 'Oxford Poets' series.

I was on the point of sending this volume to the press when I saw for the first time a copy of Mr. John Dennis' admirable selections from Southey's letters, published at Boston, U.S.A., in 1887, under the title, *Robert Southey: The Story of His Life Written in His Letters*, and subsequently reprinted in Bohn's 'Standard Library'. Mr. Dennis' book contains a most discriminating Introduction, and is excellently adapted to its purpose. But, as its title declares, that purpose is limited to telling the story of Southey's life, so far as possible, in his own words. The present edition has a wider scope. It aims not only at giving a portrait of Southey as he was, but also at illustrating from his correspondence the political and literary interest of the times in which he lived. Thus, while avoiding mere excerpts, it presents the reader with a more comprehensive collection of letters than entered into Mr. Dennis' scheme, and may claim (I hope) in justification of its existence that no attempt has previously been made to cover quite the same ground.

It only remains to express my gratitude to those friends who in various ways have kindly helped me in my task. My thanks are more particularly due to Professor Dowden and to Mr. E. H. Coleridge, to whose counsel and assistance I owe an especial debt.

M. H. F. G.

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BIOGRAPHICAL TABLE

CONTAINING THE CHIEF EVENTS OF SOUTHEY'S LIFE AND SOME IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIVES OF CONTEMPORARY WRITERS

S.=Robert Southey, the Poet.
Thomas, &c. S.=Thomas, &c. Southey.
S. T. C.=Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

A.D.	ÆT.	
1735	—	About this year Thomas Southey, son of a yeoman farmer of Wellington in Somerset, settles on a farm at Holford, a village in the Quantock Hills.
1754	—	[George Crabbe born.]
1762	—	[William Lisle Bowles born.]
1763	—	[Samuel Rogers born.]
1764	—	[*The Traveller* (O. Goldsmith).]
1765	—	[Percy's *Reliques*.]
1770	—	[William Wordsworth born. James Hogg born. Chatterton died. *The Deserted Village* (Goldsmith).]
1771	—	[Gray died. Scott born. *The Minstrel* (Beattie).]
1772	—	Robert Southey, a linen-draper at Bristol (born 1745, second son of Thomas S.), married Margaret Hill. To them were born nine children, five of whom died young. The surviving children were Robert, Thomas, Henry Herbert, and Edward. [S. T. Coleridge born.]
1774	—	ROBERT SOUTHEY born at Bristol, August 12, his parents' second and eldest surviving child.
1775	1	[Charles Lamb born. W. Savage Landor born.]
1776	2	During 1776–80 S. spends most of his time with his mother's half-sister, Miss Tyler, at Bath.

A.D.	ÆT.	
1777	3	Thomas S. born. [H. Hallam born. Thomas Campbell born.]
1778	4	[W. Hazlitt born.]
1779	5	[Thomas Moore born.]
1780	6	S. sent as a day-boy to a school kept by a Mr. Foot at Bristol.
1781	7	S. removed to a school at Corston, nine miles from Bristol. [*The Library* (Crabbe).]
1782	8	(Or Jan. 1783) S. placed as a day-boarder at a school at Bristol kept by a Mr. Williams, spending his holidays in general with Miss Tyler. From 1778 onwards Miss Tyler regularly takes him to the theatre. He reads Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher before he is eight years old. He also reads *The Faerie Queene* about this time. [Cowper's first volume of *Poems*.]
1783	9	Henry Herbert Southey born (d. 1865). S. begins to write verses, Epics on the Trojan Brutus, Egbert, &c. [*The Village* (Crabbe).]
1784	10	[Dr. Johnson died. Leigh Hunt born.]
1785	11	[De Quincey born. Thomas Love Peacock born. Henry Kirke White born. *The Task* (Cowper).]
1786	12	At the end of this year or early in 1787 S. sent as a day-boy to a Mr. Lewis, a clergyman in Bristol, who took pupils. [*Poems* (Robert Burns, Kilmarnock ed.). Caroline Bowles born.]
1788	14	S. goes to school at Westminster, where his chief friends are C. W. W. Wynn, subsequently Secretary at War and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and G. C. Bedford. [Byron born.]
1789	15	[*Sonnets* (W. L. Bowles). *The Loves of the Plants* (Darwin).]
1790	16	[Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*.]
1791	17	[John Wesley died.]
1792	18	S. expelled from Westminster for writing an article in a school newspaper, *The Flagellant*, ascribing the invention of flogging to the devil. He returns to Miss Tyler at Bristol. His father

A.D.	ÆT.	
		fails in business, and dies just after S., having been refused admission at Christ Church on account of the expulsion from Westminster, has matriculated at Balliol College.
		[Shelley born. Keble born. *Pleasures of Memory* (Rogers).]
1793	19	S. goes into residence at Balliol (Jan.), his expenses (as at Westminster) being paid by his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, Chaplain to the British Factory at Lisbon. Reads and is much influenced by Epictetus. Friendship with Edmund Seward. S. writes first draught of *Joan of Arc* in Long Vacation. Shocked by the fate of the Girondins, and especially by the execution of Brissot (Oct. 31). Begins to think of retiring to America, there to live an Arcadian life in the forest.
		[*Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches* (Wordsworth). *Tam o' Shanter*, &c. (Burns). Felicia Hemans born.]
1794	20	S. decides that he cannot conscientiously take Orders, as his uncle, Mr. Hill, had wished. His religious opinions at this time Unitarian. Meets S. T. Coleridge for the first time at Oxford (June). Together with four or five friends they form a scheme for a communistic settlement in America—Pantisocracy. S. writes Acts II and III of *The Fall of Robespierre*, S. T. C. supplying Act I. *Wat Tyler* written. *Madoc* begun. Miss Tyler breaks off all relations with S. on hearing of Pantisocracy and of his engagement to Edith Fricker (Oct.). S. proposes that for financial reasons Pantisocracy should first be tried in Wales instead of in America. *Poems by Robert Lovell and Robert Southey* published (autumn: dated on title-page, 1795).
1795	21	S. introduced to C. Lamb by S. T. C. (Jan.). S. and S. T. C. lecture at Bristol. Death of Edmund Seward (June). S. definitely declines Mr. Hill's proposal that he should take Orders, and decides to read for the bar. Abandons Pantisocracy, thereby causing a breach with

A.D.	ÆT.	
		S. T. C. Marries Edith Fricker, Nov. 14, and immediately after the wedding starts with Mr. Hill for Lisbon, leaving Mrs. S. in the care of Cottle's sisters. The marriage for the time kept secret. S. T. C. marries Sarah Fricker (Oct. 4).
		[Keats born. T. Carlyle born.]
1796	22	*Joan of Arc* published by Joseph Cottle. S. returns from Lisbon in May and settles with his wife at Bristol. Partial reconciliation with S. T. C. Death of S.'s brother-in-law, Lovell. S. writing *Letters from Spain and Portugal* and contributing also to *The Monthly Magazine*. Reads William Taylor's translations from German writers.
		[Burns died. Hartley Coleridge born. *Poems*, 1st ed., S. T. C.]
1797	23	*Letters from Spain and Portugal* and *Poems* published. S. in London and at Burton (near Christchurch in Hampshire) studying law. Becomes acquainted with J. Rickman, afterwards one of his closest friends. C. Lamb visits S. at Burton. S. receives an annuity of £160 from C. W. W. Wynn.
1798	24	S. writes verses for *The Morning Post* at a guinea a week, which he continues to do up to 1803. Visits Norwich, where he makes acquaintance with William Taylor and Dr. Sayers. Settles at Westbury, two miles from Bristol (June). In constant intercourse with Humphry Davy. Editing first vol. of *The Annual Anthology*. Second ed. of *Joan of Arc*. S. in indifferent health at end of this year.
		[*Lyrical Ballads* (Coleridge and Wordsworth). *Gebir* (W. S. Landor).]
1799	25	Westbury; London; Burton. *Madoc* finished (July 11). *Thalaba* begun (July 12). More complete reconciliation with S. T. C. (Aug.). S. and his wife visit the Coleridges at Nether Stowey. Walking tour with S. T. C. in Devonshire. First volume of *The Annual Anthology* and second volume of *Poems* pub-

A. D.	ÆT.	
		lished. S. reads and greatly admires *Gebir*. His health still unsatisfactory.
		[T. Hood born. *Pleasures of Hope* (Campbell).]
1800	26	S. collaborates with J. Cottle in preparing an edition of Chatterton's *Works* for the benefit of the latter's sister. Leaves England for Portugal with Mrs. S. for the benefit of his health (April). *Thalaba* finished (July). S. begins to collect materials for a *History of Portugal*. S. T. C. settles at Greta Hall, Keswick (Aug.). Second volume of *The Annual Anthology* published.
		[Cowper died. Macaulay born. Henry Taylor born.]
1801	27	*Thalaba* published. *Curse of Kehama* begun (May). S. returns to England (June). Completely abandons all idea of adopting the law as a profession. Begins to review again, a task-work from which he is unable to free himself for the rest of his active life. Stays with S. T. C. at Keswick (Sept.). Accepts post of private secretary to Mr. Corry, Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland.
		[*Lyrical Ballads*, 2nd ed. (pub. Jan.). *Poems* ('Thos. Little'). *Tales of Wonder* (M. G. Lewis).]
1802	28	Death of S.'s mother (Jan.). S. resigns his post as secretary. At Bristol (May). Birth of his first child, Margaret (Sept.). S. translating *Amadis of Gaul*, writing portions of a *History of Portugal*, reviewing, and continuing *Curse of Kehama*. Chatterton's *Works* (ed. Southey and Cottle) published by subscription. Peace of Amiens. This of critical importance in the development of S.'s political opinions. 'It restored in me the English feeling which had been deadened; it placed me in sympathy with my country, bringing me thus into that natural and healthy state of mind upon which time, and knowledge, and reflection were sure to produce their proper and salutary effect' (*Warter*, iii. 320).
		[Erasmus Darwin died.]

A.D.	ÆT.	
1803	29	Bristol. *Amadis of Gaul* published. Death of Margaret S. (Aug.). S. and his wife go to stay with S. T. C. at Keswick (Sept.).
1804	30	Keswick. S. T. C. starts for Malta (April 2). Edith May S. born (May 1). S. finally correcting *Madoc* for the press. *Letters from England by Don Manuel Espriella* begun.
1805	31	*Madoc* and *Metrical Tales and Other Poems* published. S. visits Scotland, and stays with Sir W. Scott at Ashestiel (Oct.). Plans to go to Lisbon for two years in the following spring. [*Lay of the Last Minstrel* (Scott). *The Prelude* finished (Wordsworth).]
1806	32	*Curse of Kehama* resumed. S. visits William Taylor at Norwich (April). Hopes to be given the Secretaryship of the Legation at Lisbon. S. T. C. returns to England (Aug.). *Chronicle of the Cid* and *Palmerin of England* begun. Herbert S. born (Oct. 11). S. undertakes to edit Henry Kirke White's *Remains* gratuitously for the White family. [*Simonidea* (Landor). *Odes and Epistles* (T. Moore). Elizabeth Barrett born.]
1807	33	Wynn obtains for S. a pension from Government of £144 net per annum, and S. therefore resigns the annuity of £160 paid him by Wynn since 1797. S. declines Scott's suggestion that he should contribute to the *Edinburgh Review*, on the ground of his complete disagreement with its principles. Decides to settle permanently at Greta Hall. *Palmerin of England*, *Letters from England by Don Manuel Espriella*, *Remains of Henry Kirke White*, and *Specimens of the later English Poets* (edited in conjunction with G. C. Bedford) published. *Madoc*, 2nd ed. S. begins to write the *History of Brazil* as the first part of his projected *History of Portugal*. Plans an edition of the *Morte d'Arthur*. [*Poems in Two Volumes* (Wordsworth). *The Parish Register* (Crabbe). *Hours of Idleness* (Byron).]

A.D.	ÆT.	
1808	34	Emma S. born (Feb.). S. meets W. S. Landor for the first time at Bristol. Landor urges him to continue his mythological poems, and offers to pay for the printing. Stung by this generous offer, S. resumes *The Curse of Kehama*, though without thought of accepting Landor's proposal. Prophesies that Spain will eventually prove Buonaparte's destruction. Plans a poem on Pelayo. S. T. C. domesticated with Wordsworth at Allan Bank, Grasmere (Sept.). *The Quarterly Review* planned. S. writes an article on the Baptist Mission in India for the first number, published Feb. 1809. *Chronicle of the Cid* published. [*Marmion* (Scott).]
1809	35	Bertha S. born (March 27), Emma S. died (May). S. T. C. publishes first number of *The Friend* at Penrith (June 1). S. takes a lease of Greta Hall for twenty-one years. Continues *History of Brazil*. Corresponds with Ebenezer Elliott, who asks him to criticize his poems. Undertakes to write the historical part of Ballantyne's new *Edinburgh Annual Register* at a salary of £400 a year. Finishes *Curse of Kehama*. Plans a poem on Robin Hood. *Roderick* begun (Dec. 2). *Thalaba*, 2nd ed. [Tract on the *Convention of Cintra* (Wordsworth). *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (Byron). *Gertrude of Wyoming* (Campbell). A. Tennyson, Charles Darwin, and W. E. Gladstone born.]
1810	36	*Curse of Kehama* and first vol. of *History of Brazil* published. Katharine S. born. S. T. C. spends four or five months at Greta Hall before leaving in October for London with Basil Montagu. Breach between S. T. C. and Wordsworth. [*The Borough* (Crabbe). *The Lady of the Lake* (Scott).]
1811	37	S. plans *Oliver Newman* and *The Book of the Church*. At work on *Life of Nelson*, an expansion of an article in the fifth number of the *Quarterly Review*. Visits Landor at Llanthony

A. D.	ÆT.	
		(July ?). Shelley at Keswick, winter of 1811–12. S. writes an article in the *Quarterly* (Oct.) on the Bell and Lancaster system of Education, advocating the establishment in every parish of a national school. This article subsequently enlarged and published separately. *Curse of Kehama*, 2nd ed. [Thackeray born. *Don Roderick* (Scott).]
1812	38	S. T. C. at Greta Hall, Feb. 23–March 26,—his last visit to the Lake Country. Isabel S. born (Nov.). Dr. Bell at Keswick. *Omniana* published. [Charles Dickens and Robert Browning born. *Tales in Verse* (Crabbe). *Count Julian* (Landor). *Childe Harold*, Cantos i and ii (Byron). *Rejected Addresses* (J. and. H. Smith).]
1813	39	S. ceases to write for the *Edinburgh Annual Register* owing to irregularity of payment. Visits Streatham and London (Sept.). Meets Lord Byron at Holland House. Appointed Poet Laureate (partly on Scott's recommendation) on Scott declining the office (Oct.). *Life of Nelson* published. *The Doctor* begun. *Ode Written during Negotiations with Buonaparte.* [*Rokeby ; The Bridal of Triermain* (Scott). *Remorse* (S. T. C.) performed at Drury Lane (Jan.)]
1814	40	S. endeavours, through Cottle, to induce S. T. C. to return to Greta Hall (April). Failing even to get an answer from S. T. C. to his letters, he gets up a subscription among friends and relations to pay Hartley C.'s college expenses (autumn). Begins correspondence with Bernard Barton. *Roderick* published. S. appointed Member of the Royal Academy of Madrid. *A Tale of Paraguay* begun. [*The Excursion* (Wordsworth). *The Feast of the Poets* (Leigh Hunt).]
1815	41	*Oliver Newman* begun. *Minor Poems* (rearranged, &c.) published, 3 vols. *Roderick*, 2nd ed. Tour in Holland and Belgium with

A.D.	ÆT.	
		Mrs. and Edith S. and Edward Nash, the artist (Sept.–Oct.).
		[First collective ed. of Wordsworth's poems published. *The White Doe of Rylstone* (Wordsworth). *The Lord of the Isles* (Scott).]
1816	42	Death of Herbert S. (April 17),—a blow from which S. never recovers. *The Poet's Pilgrimage* and *The Lay of the Laureate* published. An endeavour made by the Ministry to induce S. to conduct a political journal in London in opposition to revolutionary principles. This proposal S. declines. At this time S. advocates as palliatives of social distress the establishment of savings banks and a national system of education, the colonization of waste lands in the British Isles, and the encouragement of emigration.
		[*Alastor* (Shelley). *Christabel* (S. T. C.). *The Story of Rimini* (Leigh Hunt). *Childe Harold*, Canto iii (Byron).]
1817	43	*Wat Tyler* surreptitiously published (spring). S., in consequence, attacked by William Smith, member for Norwich, in House of Commons as 'a renegado' (March 14). Replies in a letter to *The Courier* (reprinted in his Essays), and is defended in that paper by S. T. C. Declines a proposal that he should write chief leading article in *The Times* (and, apparently, act in some measure as editor) at a salary of £2,000 a year, together with a share in the profits. Tour through Switzerland to Italian Lakes and back through Black Forest, Cologne, and Brussels (May–Aug.). *Life of Wesley* begun. *Morte d'Arthur* and *History of Brazil*, vol. ii, published.
		[*Sibylline Leaves; Biographia Literaria* (S. T. C.). *Poems* (Keats). *Lalla Rookh* (Moore). *Harold the Dauntless* (Scott). The *Whistlecraft* Poem (J. H. Frere).]
1818	44	S. refuses the offer of the post of Librarian to the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. Caroline

A.D.	ÆT.	
		Bowles writes to him (April 25) to ask his opinion of a manuscript poem, thus beginning a correspondence continued without interruption until their marriage in 1839. [*Childe Harold*, Canto iv (Byron). *Revolt of Islam* (Shelley). *Poems* (C. Lamb, in his collected Works). *Foliage* (Leigh Hunt). *Endymion* (Keats).]
1819	45	Cuthbert S. born (Feb.). Tour in Scotland with Rickman and Telford (autumn). *History of Brazil*, vol. iii, published. S. learns from Wynn of the existence of the Dedication of *Don Juan*. [*Peter Bell* and *The Waggoner* (Wordsworth). *Don Juan*, Canto i, &c. (Byron). *Tales of the Hall* (Crabbe). *Dramatic Scenes* (Procter). *Poems, Rosalind and Helen, The Euganean Hills, Hymn to Intellectual Beauty, The Cenci* (Shelley). J. Ruskin, A. H. Clough, and Charles Kingsley born.]
1820	46	*Colloquies on the Prospects of Society* and *Book of the Church* begun. In Wales and London (April, May, and June). Meets Caroline Bowles for the first time at Chelsea. D.C.L., Oxford Univ. (June 14). *Life of Wesley* published. [*The River Duddon; A Series of Sonnets* (Wordsworth). *Lamia, Isabella, Hyperion*, &c. (Keats). *Prometheus Unbound* (Shelley). *Ellen Fitzarthur* (Caroline Bowles).]
1821	47	*Vision of Judgement* published. Its Preface involves S. in a public controversy with Byron. Hearing that his friend John May has lost his fortune, S. makes over to him his entire savings, amounting to £625. *Expedition of Orsua* published. [Keats died. *Adonais* (Shelley). *Cain*, &c. (Byron).]
1822	48	*History of the Peninsular War*, vol. i, published. [*Ecclesiastical Sketches* (Wordsworth). *Hellas* (Shelley). *The Widow's Tale* (Caroline Bowles). Shelley drowned.]
1823	49	Caroline Bowles at Greta Hall (Sept.). S. writes to her (Nov. 4) to suggest that they should

A.D.	ÆT.	
		collaborate in a poem on *Robin Hood*. Visits London (Nov.). Renews his friendship with C. Lamb, which had been momentarily interrupted through the latter misunderstanding a reference by S. in the *Quarterly* to the *Essays of Elia*.
		[*The Loves of the Angels* (T. Moore). *Essays of Elia* (Lamb).]
1824	50	*Robin Hood* begun. *The Book of the Church* and *History of the Peninsular War*, vol. ii, published.
		[Byron died. *Imaginary Conversations*, vols. i and ii (Landor).]
1825	51	*Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae* begun,—an answer to C. Butler's reply to *The Book of the Church*. S. now, as always, strongly opposed to Catholic Emancipation. Tour in Belgium and Holland with Henry Taylor and two other friends (June and July). S. is laid up with an injured foot at Leyden, and stays there for a fortnight with the poet Bilderdijk, whose wife had translated *Roderick* into Dutch verse. *A Tale of Paraguay* published.
1826	52	S. visits Caroline Bowles at Buckland, near Lymington. Tours in Holland (June) with H. Taylor and Rickman. During his absence is returned to Parliament for the borough of Downton, through the influence of Lord Radnor; but refuses to accept the honour. Death of Isabel S. (July 16). From this last blow Mrs. S. never really recovers. *Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae* published.
		[*Solitary Hours* (Caroline Bowles).]
1827	53	S. undertakes to edit the poems of John Jones, a servant in a Yorkshire family, for Jones' benefit, and to prefix a sketch of the lives of uneducated poets. Mrs. S. plainly failing in health.
		[*Poems* (T. Hood). *The Christian Year* (Keble). *Poems by Two Brothers* (A. and C. Tennyson).]
1828	54	In London in order to undergo an operation (May). His portrait painted by Sir T. Lawrence

A. D.	ÆT.	
		for Sir R. Peel. Visits Caroline Bowles at Buckland. Death of his uncle, Mr. Hill (Sept.). Is paid £150 by Murray for a paper in the *Quarterly* on the Roman Catholic Question and Ireland, strongly opposing Catholic Emancipation. [*History of Peninsular War*, vol. i (Sir W. Napier).]
1829	55	*Lives of Uneducated Poets—Prefixed to Verses by John Jones* published. *All for Love* and *The Legend of a Cock and a Hen* (1 vol.), and *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society* published. Mrs. Coleridge and Sara C. leave Greta Hall on the marriage of the latter to H. N. Coleridge, Mrs. C. subsequently taking up her residence with her daughter and son-in-law. S. continues to advocate the establishment of Co-operative Societies. [*Chapters on Churchyards* (Caroline Bowles). *Imaginary Conversations*, second series (Landor).]
1830	56	S. engaged in writing *Life of Bunyan* and *Naval History of England*. *Life of Bunyan* published, prefixed to an edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*. [Hazlitt died. *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* (A. Tennyson).]
1831	57	S. visits Caroline Bowles at Buckland (Jan.). Visits Dr. Bell at Cheltenham (June). *Select Works of British Poets from Chaucer to Jonson* published. S. continues (as, like Wordsworth, he had done from the first) strongly to oppose Parliamentary Reform. [*Corn Law Rhymes* (Ebenezer Elliott).]
1832	58	*Essays, Moral and Political* published (Jan. or ? Dec., 1831). *History of the Peninsular War*, vol. iii, published. Death of Dr. Bell, who leaves S. £1,000, with a request that he should write his Life. S. refuses offer of a Professorship of History at Durham University. Landor visits S. at Keswick (June). [Sir W. Scott died. Crabbe died. Bentham died. Dr. Arnold buys Fox How.]

A. D.	ÆT.	
1833	59	Correspondence with Lord Ashley on Factory Legislation. S. begins to work at Dr. Bell's *Life and Correspondence*. *Naval History of England*, vols. i and ii, published. [*Pauline* (R. Browning). *Poems* (Hartley Coleridge).]
1834	60	*The Doctor, &c.*, vols. i and ii, published. Edith May S. marries the Rev. J. W. Warter (Jan.). *Naval History*, vol. iii, published. *Life of Cowper* begun. Mrs. S. loses her reason (Sept.) and is removed to the asylum at York. [S. T. C. died (July 25). C. Lamb died (Dec. 27). *Philip van Artevelde* (H. Taylor).]
1835	61	S. declines the offer of a baronetcy from Sir R. Peel, who then obtains for him an additional pension of £300 a year. Mrs. S., though without regaining her reason, so far recovers as to be allowed to return to Keswick (March). Publication of *Life and Works of Cowper* (15 vols., 1835–7) begun. [*Yarrow Revisited and other Poems* (Wordsworth). Mrs. Hemans died. James Hogg died. *Paracelsus* (R. Browning).]
1836	62	Tour in West of England with Cuthbert S. (Oct.–Feb., 1837). Meets Landor at Clifton and stays at Bremhill with W. L. Bowles. [*Pericles and Aspasia* (Landor). *The Birthday* (Caroline Bowles). William Taylor of Norwich died.]
1837	63	S. corresponds with Charlotte Brontë in answer to a request for his criticism of her poems. 'Mr. Southey's letter was kind and admirable, a little stringent, but it did me good' (C. Brontë). Publication of collected edition of S.'s poems in 10 vols. begun. Cuthbert S. matriculates at Oxford. Mrs. S. died (Nov. 16). [*Strafford* (R. Browning). *The French Revolution* (T. Carlyle).]
1838	64	Tour in Normandy, Brittany, and Touraine with Cuthbert S., H. C. Robinson, and three other friends (Aug., Sept.). S. now first begins to

A. D.	ÆT.	
		show signs of failing powers. At Buckland with Caroline Bowles (Oct.–Dec.).
1839	65	Bertha S. marries her cousin Herbert Hill. S. marries Caroline Bowles (June 5). Soon afterwards his mind fails rapidly, until its powers are completely lost. In this condition he lives at Keswick until his death.
1843	69	Robert Southey died (March 21). Buried in Crosthwaite Churchyard.

SELECTED LETTERS OF ROBERT SOUTHEY

I. To G. C. Bedford

March 16, 1793.

I am now sitting without fire in a cold day, waiting for Wynn to go upon the Isis, 'silver-slippered queen,' as Warton calls her; the epithet may be classical, but it certainly is ridiculous. Of all poetical figures the prosopopoeia is that most likely to be adopted by a savage nation, and which adds most ornament, but not to composition; but in the name of common sense, what appropriate idea does 'silver-slippered' convey? Homer's Χρυσοπέδιλος probably alludes to some well-known statue so habited. Nature is a much better guide than antiquity.

Wednesday.

On the water I went yesterday, in a little skiff, which the least deviation from the balance would overset. To manage two oars and yet unable to handle one! My first setting off was curious. I did not step exactly in the middle, the boat tilted up, and a large barge from which I embarked alone saved me from a good ducking; my arm, however, got completely wet. I tugged at the oar very much like a bear in a boat; or, if you can conceive anything more awkward, liken me to it, and you will have a better simile. When I walk over these streets what various recollections throng upon me, what scenes fancy delineates from the hour when Alfred first marked it as the seat of learning!

Bacon's study is demolished, so I shall never have the honour of being killed by its fall; before my window Latimer and Ridley were burnt, and there is not even a stone to mark the place where a monument should be erected to religious liberty. I have walked over the ruins of Godstow Nunnery with sensations such as the site of Troy or Carthage would inspire; a spot so famed by our minstrels, so celebrated by tradition, and so memorable in the annals of legendary, yet romantic, truth. Poor Rosamond! some unskilful impostor has painted an epitaph upon the chapel wall, evidently within this century; the precise spot where she lies is forgotten, and the traces are still visible of a subterranean passage—perhaps the scene of many a deed of darkness; but we should suppose the best:—surely amongst the tribe who were secluded from the world, there may have been some whose motives were good among so many victims of compulsion and injustice. Do you recollect Richardson's plan for Protestant nunneries? To monastic foundations I have little attachment; but were the Colleges ever to be reformed (and reformation will not come before it is wanted), I would have a little more of the discipline kept up. Temperance is much wanted; the waters of Helicon are far too much polluted by the wine of Bacchus ever to produce any effect. With respect to its superiors, Oxford only exhibits waste of wigs and want of wisdom; with respect to undergraduates, every species of abandoned excess. As for me, I regard myself too much to run into the vices so common and so destructive. I have not yet been drunk, nor mean to be so. What use can be made of a collegiate life I wish to make; but in the midst of all, when I look back to Rousseau, and compare myself either with his Emilius or the real pupil of Madame Brulenck, I feel ashamed and humbled at the comparison. Never shall child of mine enter a public school or a university. Perhaps I may not be able so well to instruct him in logic or languages, but I can at least preserve him from vice.—Yours sincerely,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

2. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Bath, Dec. 14, 1793.

The gentleman who brings this letter must occupy a few lines of it. His name is Lovel: I know him but very little personally, though long by report; you must already see he is eccentric. Perhaps I do wrong in giving him this, but I wish your opinion of him. Those who are superficially acquainted with him feel wonder; those who know him, love. This character I hear. He is on the point of marrying a young woman with whom I spent great part of my younger years; we were bred up together I may almost say, and that period was the happiest of my life. Mr. Lovel has very great abilities; he writes well: in short, I wish his acquaintance myself; and, as his stay in town is very short, you will forgive the introduction. Perhaps you may rank him with Duppa, and, supposing excellence to be at 100, Duppa is certainly much above 50. Now, my dear Grosvenor, I doubt I am acting improperly; it was enough to introduce myself so rudely: but abilities always claim respect, and that Lovel has these I think very certain. Characters, if anyways marked, are well worth studying; and a young man of two-and-twenty, who has been his own master since fifteen, and who owes all his knowledge to himself, is so far a respectable character. My knowledge of him, I again repeat, is very confined: his intended bride I look upon as almost a sister, and one should know one's brother-in-law.

What is to become of me at ordination Heaven only knows! After keeping the straight path so long the Test Act will be a stumbling-block to honesty; so chance and providence must take care of that, and I will fortify myself against chance. The wants of man are so very few that they must be attainable somewhere, and, whether here or in America, matters little; I have long learnt to look upon the world as my country.

Now, if you are in the mood for a reverie, fancy only me in America; imagine my ground uncultivated since the creation, and see me wielding the axe, now to cut down the tree, and now the snakes that nestled in it. Then see me grubbing up the roots, and building a nice snug little dairy with them: three rooms in my cottage, and my only companion some poor negro whom I have bought on purpose to emancipate. After a hard day's toil, see me sleep upon rushes, and, in very bad weather, take out my casette and write to you, for you shall positively write to me in America. Do not imagine I shall leave rhyming or philosophizing, so thus your friend will realize the romance of Cowley, and even outdo the seclusion of Rousseau; till at last comes an ill-looking Indian with a tomahawk, and scalps me,—a most melancholy proof that society is very bad, and that I shall have done very little to improve it! So vanity, vanity will come from my lips, and poor Southey will either be cooked for a Cherokee, or oysterized by a tiger.

I have finished transcribing *Joan*, and bound her in marble paper with green ribbon, and now am about copying all my remainables to carry to Oxford. Thence once more a clear field, and then another epic poem, and then another, and so on, till Truth shall write on my tomb—'Here lies an odd mortal, whose life only benefited the paper manufacturers, and whose death will only hurt the post office.'

Do send my great coat, &c. My distresses are so great that I want words to express the inconvenience I suffer. So as breakfast is not yet ready (it is almost nine o'clock), you shall have an ode to my great coat. Excellent subject, excellent trifler,—or blockhead, say you; but, Bedford, I must either be too trifling or too serious; the first can do no harm, and I know the last does no good. So come forth my book of Epistles.

3. To Thomas Southey

Bath, October 19, 1794.

My dear Brother Admiral,—Here 's a row ! here 's a kick up ! here 's a pretty commence ! we have had a revolution in the College Green, and I have been turned out of doors in a wet night. Lo and behold, even like mine own brother, I was penniless: it was late in the evening; the wind blew and the rain fell, and I had walked from Bath in the morning. Luckily my father's old great coat was at Lovell's. I clapped it on, swallowed a glass of brandy, and set off; I met an old drunken man three miles off, and was obliged to drag him all the way to Bath, nine miles ! Oh, Patience, Patience, thou hast often helped poor Robert Southey, but never didst thou stand him in more need than on Friday the 17th of October, 1794.

Well, Tom, here I am. My aunt has declared she will never see my face again, or open a letter of my writing.—So be it; I do my duty, and will continue to do it, be the consequences what they may. You are unpleasantly situated, so is my mother, so were we all till this grand scheme of Pantisocracy flashed upon our minds, and now all is perfectly delightful.

Open war—declared hostilities ! the children are to come here on Wednesday, and I meet them at the Long Coach on that evening. My aunt abuses poor Lovell most unmercifully, and attributes the whole scheme to him; you know it was concerted between Burnett and me. But of all the whole catalogue of enormities, nothing enrages my aunt so much as my intended marriage with Mrs. Lovell's sister Edith; this will hardly take place till we arrive in America; it rouses all the whole army of prejudices in my aunt's breast. Pride leads the fiery host, and a pretty kick up they must make there.

I expect some money in a few days, and then you shall not want; yet, as this is not *quite* certain, I cannot authorize you to draw on me. Lovell is in London,

he will return on Tuesday or Wednesday, and I hope will bring with him some ten or twenty pounds; he will likewise examine the wills at Doctors' Commons, and see what is to be done in the reversion way.—Everything is in the fairest train. Favell and Le Grice, two young Pantisocrats of nineteen, join us; they possess great genius and energy. I have seen neither of them, yet correspond with both. You may, perhaps, like this sonnet on the subject of our emigration, by Favell:—

No more my visionary soul shall dwell
On joys that were; no more endure to weigh
The shame and anguish of the evil day,
Wisely forgetful! O'er the ocean swell.
Sublime of Hope, I seek the cottag'd dell
Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray,
And, dancing to the moonlight roundelay,
The wizard passion wears a holy spell.
Eyes that have ach'd with anguish! ye shall weep
Tears of doubt-mingled joy, as those who start
From precipices of distemper'd sleep,
On which the fierce-ey'd fiends their revels keep,
And see the rising sun, and feel it dart
New rays of pleasure trembling to the heart.

This is a very beautiful piece of poetry; and we may form a very fair opinion of Favell from it. Scott, a brother of your acquaintance, goes with us. So much for news relative to our private politics.

This is the age of revolutions, and a huge one we have had on the College Green. Poor Shadrack is left there, in the burning fiery furnace of her displeasure, and a prime hot berth has he got of it; he saw me depart with astonishment.—'Why, Sir, you be'nt going to Bath at this time of night, and in this weather! Do let me see you sometimes, and hear from you, and send for me when you are going.'

We are all well, and all eager to depart. March will soon arrive, and I hope you will be with us before that time.

Why should the man who acts from conviction of

rectitude grieve because the prejudiced are offended? For me, I am fully possessed by the great cause to which I have devoted myself; my conduct has been open, sincere, and just; and though the world were to scorn and neglect me, I should bear their contempt with calmness.—Fare thee well. Yours in brotherly affection, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

4. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Bristol, June 15, 1795.

Bedford—he is dead; my dear Edmund Seward! after six weeks' suffering.

These, Grosvenor, are the losses that gradually wean us from life. May that man want consolation in his last hour, who would rob the survivor of the belief, that he shall again behold his friend! You know not, Grosvenor, how I loved poor Edmund: he taught me all that I have of good. When I went with him into Worcestershire, I was astonished at the general joy his return occasioned—the very dogs ran out to him. In that room where I have so often seen him, he now lies in his coffin!

It is like a dream, the idea that he is dead—that his heart is cold—that he, whom but yesterday morning I thought and talked of as alive—as the friend I knew and loved—is dead! When these things come home to the heart, they palsy it. I am sick at heart; and, if I feel thus acutely, what must his sisters feel? what his poor old mother, whose life was wrapped up in Edmund? I have seen her look at him till the tears ran down her cheek.

There is a strange vacancy in my heart. The sun shines as usual, but there is a blank in existence to me. I have lost a friend, and such a one! God bless you, my dear, dear Grosvenor! Write to me immediately. I will try, by assiduous employment, to get rid of very melancholy thoughts. I am continually dwelling on the days when we were together: there was a time

when the sun never rose that I did not see Seward. It is very wrong to feel thus; it is unmanly.—God bless you! ROBERT SOUTHEY.

PS. I wrote to Edmund on receiving your last: my letter arrived the hour of his death, four o'clock on Wednesday last. Perhaps he remembered me at that hour.

Grosvenor, I am a child; and all are children who fix their happiness on such a reptile as man;—this great, this self-ennobled being called man, the next change of weather may blast him.

There is another world where all these things will be amended.

God help the man who survives all his friends.

5. To C. W. WILLIAMS WYNN

Lisbon, Jan. 26, 1796.

I am safe and in health; and, after a tempest at sea, a journey of 800 miles in Spain, and an earthquake at Lisbon, this is more than I had reason to expect. Our passage was very bad: the dead-lights were up sixty hours; the danger was magnified by my apprehensions and the unskilfulness of Spanish sailors; and I can now form a tolerable idea of what a man feels at the point of death. We remained five days at Corunna, the only place where I met with the society I wished. Jardine is consul there: you have probably waded through his travels, a book that conveys much thought in a most uninteresting manner. Such at least was the opinion I formed of it three years ago. He behaved to me with that degree of attention that soon produces intimacy. My time at Corunna was chiefly spent at his house, and he gave me much information respecting the country. I met a singular character there, the filthiest of Spaniards, with the finest of physiognomies; he was a monk, but had walked to Rome to procure a dispensation from his vows, and now employs his time in writing poetry. He lives with his brother, a man of some

fortune, and enjoys all the luxury of dirt and indolence, —the two characteristics of a Spaniard. He conversed in Latin with some difficulty on account of our different pronunciations. He told me that they were very far behind the rest of Europe in literature, but, said he, crossing his hands, 'Our hands are tied *istâ terribili Inquisitione!*' I learnt afterwards that his opinions were atheistical; and indeed I believe there is no medium in the country between the most gross ignorance and atheism. Our journey to Madrid (400 miles) took up eighteen days and a half. We were up before daybreak, and travelled till after sunset. Of the *posadas* you never can have seen an exaggerated account, miserable hovels of filth and wretchedness—yet we met with the greatest civility. In both countries the peasantry are very hospitable, and eager to accommodate. It is true they are apt to impose upon travellers, but this is the case everywhere, and it is easy to excuse extortion when it arises from want. The higher classes are despicable, and the whole body of people depraved beyond all my ideas of licentiousness. The Queen of Spain travels publicly with her *cortejos*; and certain families go with the King, because (say the people here) he cannot do without a wife. You may know a Portuguese nobleman by the feeble and blighted body he inherits from the vice of his ancestors: vice is now more general, and its consequent disease almost universal. Over the departed spirit of Spanish gallantry Mr. Burke might pronounce with propriety a funeral oration. The American *chargé d'affaires* at Madrid lived with a friend's wife at the hotel for a week while the husband was in the country; but adultery is universal. A Swiss officer in the English service gave the Marquis Santiago the lie in his own house, and beat him, while we were at Madrid. He remained three days in expectation of a challenge, and then took himself out of the reach of assassination. You have heard by the papers how the two Kings of Brentford are to meet. We followed the Spanish court. Their train amounted to 7,000 people; and they have marked their way by dirting all the

linen, eating up all the provisions, cutting up the roads, burning and mutilating the trees, and leaving dead mules, horses, and asses. At every place we heard complaints, for not a *real* had been paid. Once they inquired if we were come to pay the King's debts. They apprehend at Madrid that the King will fix his court elsewhere. They dislike that place, and the Queen (a woman very ugly, very abandoned, and very unpopular) has seldom entered it since some seditious washerwomen insulted her two years ago. 'You amuse yourself with your *cortejos*, and dress yourself in your jewels, while we are in want of bread,' cried the old girls; and they are now in perpetual confinement. His Majesty is a mighty hunter, and in the neighbourhood of Merida killed birds innumerable, five wolves, and a pole-cat. We saw a cart-load of stags' horns which he sent to the palace at Madrid.

The name of an Englishman is a passport through Spain; and the only place where we met with incivility was where they thought us French. I am informed that the contrary is the case in those provinces where the French penetrated. We broke down three times upon the road, and once slept in the room with a barber-surgeon and his wife. This doctor asked my uncle, on finding he was an Englishman, if he believed in God,—and in Jesus Christ too? 'Ask him,' said his son-in-law, in a whisper loud enough to be heard,—'ask him if he believes in the Virgin Mary.'

As for vermin, Apollo was a fool for flaying Marsyas; he should have put him to bed in Spain, and he would have skinned himself by the morning. Rich tracks of land are uncultivated for want of hands; and we have often travelled five or six hours without seeing any trace of man except the agreeable memento of a few monumental crosses. There are always a great number of children in the neighbourhood of a convent; and this, scandalous as it may seem, forces itself upon a traveller. No situation can be worse than that of Madrid, exposed to the extremes of heat and cold; and, at such a distance from the sea, the necessaries of life are very dear,

and the comforts are not to be purchased. We were fifteen days on the road to Lisbon, where I arrived after crossing the Tagus at night in a high wind,—to the disappointment of finding no packet had arrived from England since we left it, and to be awakened at five the next morning by an earthquake, the severest that has been felt since the great one. The people are very much alarmed: it is the seventh shock since the beginning of November. Some walls and a cross from one of the churches were thrown down by it; and they say most houses must be weakened so much that another shock, if equally strong, would destroy them. So much are they alarmed, that two persons in the circle of my uncle's acquaintance have already removed to a lower situation.

Your letter reached me before I left Falmouth. There was the sinking of the heart when night and distance hid the shore from view beyond any feeling I could have conceived,—to look around upon such a waste of waters! I was very sick till fear conquered sickness. The fatigue of travelling did not affect me.[1]

And of what advantage has this journey been to me? Why, I have learnt to thank God that I am an Englishman; for though things are not quite so well there as in El Dorado, they are better than anywhere else. I know no news later than the fifth of December; and indeed I now think so much of private life, that public affairs affect me little. I have every reason to expect happiness, and yet dare not expect it. My prospects in life have varied so often that I almost doubt the stability of any one.

So it is my fixed intention to quit this country in May. I can live in compliance with my mother's earnest wishes. I have reaped instruction, for I do not expect pleasure: the acquisition of two languages is valuable. I go this evening to an Abbé for the first time to converse in French: this my uncle is earnest with me to acquire. I had begun to speak a little Spanish when we entered Portugal, and find little difficulty in corrupting

[1] MS. illegible, and part torn out.

it into Portuguese. The society of this place is very irksome; the men have no ideas but of business, and though the women are accomplished, yet their company only renders the absence of one woman more painful. I cannot play with a lady's fan and talk nonsense to her; and this is all the men here are capable of doing. I have the *maladie du pays*, and a very wearying disorder it is. Gladly would I exchange the golden Tagus with the olive and orange groves of Portugal, for the mud-encumbered tide of Avon and a glimpse of Bristol smoke. Were there leisure in this place, I should write a tragedy, for I struck out a strange subject on the road, one that if it be not too bold and eccentric is capable of great effect. I have sometimes thought of Inez de Castro and of the revenge of Pedro. As the spring advances I shall make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Inez; 'tis about two days' journey from Lisbon. Direct to me with Rev. Herbert Hill, Lisbon. It is almost two years since we have seen each other, and the Bay of Biscay is between us. God bless you.

R. Southey.

6. To John May

Burton, July 11, 1797.

I thank you for Chapelain: I read his poem with the hope of finding something good, and would gladly have reversed the sentence of condemnation which I must, in common honesty, confirm; it is very bad indeed, and can please only by its absurdity.

I thank you also for your good opinion of me: I would fain be thought well of by the 'ten righteous men', and communicate frequently with you as one of them. I suffer no gloomy presages to disturb the tranquil happiness with which God has blest me now, and which I know how to value, because I have felt what it is to want everything, except the pride of a well-satisfied conscience.

The sister and niece of Chatterton are now wholly destitute: on this occasion I appear as editor of all

his works for their relief; this is an heinous sin against the world's opinion, for a young lawyer, but it would have been a real crime to have refused it. We have a black scene to lay before the public: these poor women have been left in want, while a set of scoundrels have been reaping hundreds from the writings of Chatterton. I hope now to make the catastrophe to the history of the poor boy of Bristol; you shall see the proposals as soon as they are printed. Cottle has been with me a few days, and we have arranged everything relative to this business; he is the publisher, and means to get the paper at prime cost, and not receive the usual profit from what he sells. The accounts will be published, and we hope and expect to place Mrs. Newton in comfort during the last years of her life.

Cottle brought with him the new edition of Coleridge's poems: they are dedicated to his brother George in one of the most beautiful poems I ever read. It contains all the poems of Lloyd and Lamb, and I know no volume that can be compared to it. You know not how infinitely my happiness is increased by residing in the country. I have not a wish beyond the quietness I enjoy; everything is tranquil and beautiful; but sometimes I look forward with regret to the time when I must return to a city which I so heartily dislike.—God bless you! Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

7. To JOHN MAY

Burton, July 19, 1797.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I sincerely thank you for your letter; its contents are strange; and I am inclined to think when my uncle blamed me for not doing my utmost to relieve my family, he must have alluded to my repeated refusal of entering into orders; a step which undoubtedly would have almost instantly relieved them, and which occasioned me great anguish and many conflicts of mind. To this I have been urged by him and

by my mother; but you know what my religious opinions are, and I need not ask you whether I did rightly and honestly in refusing.

Till Christmas last I supported myself wholly by the profits of my writings. When I left Lisbon I had thirty pounds from my uncle, of which a large part was expended in paying my passage and the journey home. When my determination was made not to enter into the church, I instantly quitted the university, that my uncle might no longer be inconvenienced by me. I applied for a clerk's place in a public office, and my republican principles occasioned my ill success. At this time my acquaintance with Coleridge commenced; I had all the enthusiasm which a young man of strong feelings and an acute sense of right and wrong can possess, and resolved to go to America and attempt to establish a better system. We hoped to raise a sum sufficient amongst us, and I had then expectations that the reversion of a family estate might be sold, which has since proved worth nothing. Wild as the plan was, it wanted not plausibility, and my mother would have gone with us had it taken place. At the end of 1794 I found myself disappointed in this: my aunt, with whom I had previously lived, had turned me out of her doors; and I would not be burdensome to my mother, though my quitting her was against her wishes. I went to Bristol to Coleridge, and supported myself, and almost him, I may say, for what my labours earned were as four to one. I gave lectures, I wrote indefatigably; nor is there a single action of this whole period that I would wish undone.

One friend I had—only one—willing and able to serve me; but he had not the power till he was of age. In the summer of 1795 my uncle, as you know, came to England; he urged me very strongly to take orders. My heart was heavily afflicted; my literary resources were exhausted; and it was yet a year and a half before my friend could assist me; and you will believe me when I say that my spirit could but ill brook dependence. I add to this, that my opinion of —— was not what it

had been; for by long living with him, I knew much of his character now. I gave him my uncle's letter when it arrived, and told him I knew not what I ought to do. I wrote to my friend: he strongly advised me against the church, and recommended the law when he could enable me to pursue it. After some days I followed this advice. As our finances no longer suffered us to remain at Bristol as we had done, we removed as we had before agreed,—I to my mother; and our arrears were paid with twenty guineas which Cottle advanced as the copyright price of the poems which were published, not till after my return from Lisbon. During all this —— was to all appearance as he had ever been towards me; but I discovered that he had been employing every possible calumny against me, and representing me as a villain.

My mother's was now my home, but I was more frequently with Cottle; and with a mind agitated by so many feelings did I compose the greater part of *Joan of Arc*. When this was nearly completed, my uncle asked me to go abroad with him. I consented, and married the morning of my departure. This too requires some explanation. I had never avowed a long-formed attachment till the prospect of settling in America made me believe it justifiable. I placed Edith during my absence with Cottle's sister, who keeps a school, as one of their family, and it was not proper that she should be supported by me except as my wife. The remainder of what *Joan of Arc* was to produce would defray this expense. On my return I had resolved still to leave her there, and live separately till the Christmas of 1796, when I had no evil to endure but dependence. I returned, however, with the remainder of the £30—about £18 I believe. I had likewise the matter for my letters, which were only published from necessity. Cottle supplied me in advance with such small sums as I wanted from time to time, which the sale of the first edition of that book would repay, and my own reserved copies of *Joan of Arc* produced me enough with these assistances. By Christmas I had published

my poems and letters, and in the course of the following month received the first quarterly payment of an annuity of £160. Had this been without the heavy encumbrance of such obligation, I would have taken a cottage and lived there with my wife and mother, without one wish unsatisfied. As it was, it was my duty to labour till I could do this independently by the law. We had clothes to purchase, some little to discharge,—and a journey to London. With these drawbacks you will easily conceive that at the end of the first half-year nothing could remain.

It is only two days since I have learnt that my mother had any obligations to ——, and what that obligation was I knew not till your letter informed me. My uncle wrote to me by Thomas, said he had desired Burn to send me ten pounds, that he would supply me with money from time to time, and requested therefore to know the state of my finances. This surprised me, because I had told him what I expected. On the receipt of this letter, I wrote to my mother, and told her to expect this ten pounds, which I fortunately wanted not. For this purpose I wrote to Burn for it by means of Thomas, explaining to Thomas why I accepted it, that he might not think I was wantonly draining my uncle: this I shall explain in my letter to Lisbon, which fortunately is not yet written.

Thus you may see that the only means I have ever possessed of assisting my mother was by entering the church. God knows I would exchange every intellectual gift which he has blessed me with for implicit faith to have been able to do this. I have urged her to come and live with me. She has a large lodging-house which does not pay its own rent, and my wish is that she would let the remainder of her house upon a reduced rent, and sink a certain little to prevent greater loss. I can then support her.

I care not for the opinion of the world, but would willingly be thought justly of by a few individuals. I labour at a study which I very much dislike to render myself independent; and I work for the booksellers

whenever I can get employment, that I may have to spare for others. I sent ten pounds when last in London to Edith's mother, whose wants were more pressing than those of my own. I now do all I can; perhaps I may one day be enabled to do all I wish; however, there is One who will accept the will for the deed. God bless you. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

8. To THOMAS SOUTHEY

Friday, July 12, 1799.

MY DEAR TOM,—I write to you from Danvers's, where we are and have been since we left Westbury. I have been to Biddlecombe's,[1] and surveyed Southey Palace that is to be. We shall not get possession till Michaelmas. The place will be comfortable; the garden is large, but unstocked, with a fish-pond and a pigeon-house. My mother is in the College Green. Edith and I are going into Devonshire, first to the north coast, Minehead, the Valley of Stones, and Ilfracombe, the wildest part of the country; perhaps we may cross over to the south on our way to Burton. I wish to see Lightfoot at Kingsbridge, and there would be a likelihood of seeing you.

My miscellaneous volume, which is to be christened Annual Poems, comes on rapidly; they are now striking off the eleventh sheet.

Yesterday I finished *Madoc*, thank God! and thoroughly to my own satisfaction; but I have resolved on one great, laborious, and radical alteration. It was my design to identify Madoc with Mango Capac. the legislator of Peru: in this I have totally failed, therefore Mango Capac is to be the hero of another poem; and instead of carrying Madoc down the Marānon, I shall follow the more probable opinion and land him in Florida: here, instead of the Peruvians, who have no striking manners for my poem, we get

[1] The name of a friend residing at Christchurch, Hampshire.

among the wild North American Indians; on their customs and superstitions facts must be grounded, and woven into the work, spliced so neatly as not to betray the junction. These alterations I delay. So much for *Madoc*; it is a great work done, and my brain is now ready to receive the Dom Daniel, the next labour in succession. Of the metre of this poem I have thought much, and my final resolution is to write it irregularly, without rhymes: for this I could give you reasons in plenty; but, as you cannot lend me your ear, we will defer it till you hear the poem. This work is intended for immediate publication.

My first poems are going to press for a third edition: by the time they are completed, I shall probably have a second volume of the Annual Poems ready; and so I and the printers go merrily on.

Oh, Tom! such a gas has Davy discovered, the gaseous oxyde! Oh, Tom! I have had some; it made me laugh and tingle in every toe and finger tip. Davy has actually invented a new pleasure, for which language has no name. Oh, Tom! I am going for more this evening; it makes one strong, and so happy! so gloriously happy! and without any after-debility, but, instead of it, increased strength of mind and body. Oh, excellent air-bag! Tom, I am sure the air in heaven must be this wonder-working gas of delight! Yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

9. To JOHN MAY

Kingsdown, Bristol, Feb. 9, 1800.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is so long since I have heard from you, that I feel a degree of uneasiness at your silence; but one great benefit of marriage is, that it never allows those intervals of vacancy which must occur in the best directed solitude, and which probably create the epistolary mania in very young persons. This was my own case once: I wrote not from a fullness of matter to communicate, but from sheer emptiness—day after day—foolscap sheets, and close writing, for

three pages, and the top and bottom of the fourth. More knowledge, and the daily increasing consciousness of how much yet remains to be learnt, more employments, and marriage, have long since cured me. My pleasure now consists in receiving letters, not in writing them.

The state of my health is in some respects amended, in others stationary. I had accustomed myself to low living, seldom eating, except at breakfast and dinner, and then with an appetite no ways like my Portugal one, and, when at home, drinking only water. Since my removal here, I have increased the number of my meals, taking porter with my meat, and wine after it. Certainly I feel stronger; but the startings and miserable feelings which have so long distressed me at night still continued, and were only lessened by ether—not removed. About a fortnight ago I breathed the oxyde of azote, the air whose strange effects you must have seen some account of in the Reviews. I had been fearful of it since my return to Bristol, but on making the experiment was surprised by its beneficial influence. I slept without the disease, which, for months before, had invariably preceded sleep. After several nights, it recurred again: I repeated the dose, and have taken it about once in three days since, and the complaint has been till now removed. To say the gas has been the cause would be hasty, but I cannot help thinking so. The pain in my side still continues; its intermittence seems to prove that there is no organic affection; and this is the opinion of all my medical friends. The spring is advancing, and I hope something from warmer and more inconstant weather. Certainly I will avoid the next winter; the experience of two has satisfied me of the ill effect of that season on my health. I have written to Lisbon, and stated to my uncle my reason for thinking of removing somewhere abroad, and the sum I can raise for the consequent expense; my reasons also for not determining immediately upon Lisbon; at the same time stating, that, if he thought that more advisable, all circumstances considered,

I would adopt that plan, and employ my time there by seriously beginning the history of the country,—a work which I could complete in England, but for which the materials and the necessary topographical knowledge must be sought in Portugal. His answer will determine me. On the whole, I am inclined to wish that his advice may favour this plan. Occasional excursions of a fortnight or three weeks would afford novelty enough, and make me well acquainted with the whole of the country. I know the language well enough to travel without embarrassment, and the subject of my studies would supply a constant interest of employment. Less than two quarto volumes could not comprise the work,—I should suppose not less than three ; for the great Indian Episode would require one to itself. The pecuniary profit of such a work might be estimated at not much less than a thousand pounds. Gibbon's six quartos acquired him eight thousand. Here is a great plan ; and the embryo skeletons of chapters on the religion, and manners, and literature of the country are now floating before me—and one half-filled sheet of paper by the next packet may crush them all !

I wait here for this letter, to regulate by it my movements, either to lose no time in getting into Germany, that I may reach Trieste by autumn, or to return to Barton, and wait there a fit time for my departure to Falmouth. In either case I shall see you, either when I visit London, or when you visit Hampshire. In the course of a very few weeks, I shall have the second *Anthology* to send you ; numerous contributions have arrived ; and I shall not have written a single line myself with an immediate view to the volume. Of *Thalaba* eight books are finished.

Will you exert yourself to assist the Chatterton subscription ? I am setting all my friends to work in this way, and a little trouble will render the sister and her daughter comfortable for life. The volumes will be fairly priced at sixteen shillings. We have 177 names on our list, chiefly Bristol and Cumberland subscrip-

tions. From Hampshire I expect 20 or 30 more, a greater number from Norfolk, and in London I suppose the great subscription will be. The sale of 750 copies would produce between four and five hundred pounds; and, the circumstances considered, this will be a smaller subscription than ought to have been expected. Edith desires to be remembered. God bless you.—Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

10. To JOHN MAY

Feb. 18, 1800.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your last letter entered into an interesting subject. A young man entering into the world is exposed to hourly danger—and what more important than to discover the best preservative? To have a friend dear enough, and respectable enough, to hold the place of a confessor, would assuredly be the best; and if the office of confessor could always be well filled, I would give up half the Reformation to restore it. In my moments of reverie I have sometimes imagined myself such a character—the obscure instrument in promoting virtue and happiness, but it is obvious that more evil than good results from the power being, like other power, often in improper hands. I have wandered from the subject. It is not likely I shall ever gain the confidence of my brothers to the desired extent: whatever affection they may feel for me, a sort of fear is mixed with it; I am more the object of their esteem than love: there has been no equality between us; we have been rarely domesticated together, and when that has been the case, they have been accustomed, if they were faulty, to understand my silent disapprobation. No; —— will never entrust his feelings to me: and as to precepts of warning, indeed I doubt their propriety; I doubt lest, from the strange perverting power of the mind, they should be made to minister to temptation. Indirect admonition, example,—are not these better means? Feelings

almost romantically refined were my preservation, and with these I amalgamated afterwards an almost stoical morality.

My health fluctuates, and the necessity of changing climate is sadly and sufficiently obvious, lest, though my disease should prove of no serious danger, the worst habits of hypochondriasm fasten upon me and palsy all intellectual power. I look with anxiety for my uncle's letter; and think so much of Lisbon, that to abandon the thought would be a considerable disappointment. It would highly gratify me to see my uncle, and I have associations with Lisbon that give me a friendship for the place—recollected feelings and hopes, pleasures and anxieties—all now mellowed into remembrances that endear the associated scenes. But that my uncle should approve,—that is perhaps little probable; a few weeks will decide; and if I do not go to Portugal, I have no choice but Italy, for Madeira is a prison, and the voyage to the West Indies of a terrifying length. This detestable war! if they would make peace upon motives as light as they made war, there would be cause enough, because I want to cross from Dover to Calais: it would save me some seasickness, and the wealth and blood of the nation into the bargain.

I have busied myself in idleness already in the *History of Portugal*, and the interest which I take in this employment will make me visit the field of Ourique and the banks of Mondeyo and the grave of Inez. The Indian transactions are too much for an episode, and must be separately related. The manners and literature of the country should accompany the chronological order of events. I should disturb the spiders of the Necessidades, and leave no convent library unransacked. Should Italy be my destination, no definite object of research presents itself: the literature of that country is too vast a field to be harvested by one labourer; the history split into fifty channels; the petty broils of petty states infinitely perplexed, infinitely insignificant.

You have heard me mention Rickman, as one whose society was my great motive for taking the cottage at Burton. He is coming to Bristol to assist me in an undertaking which he proposed and pressed upon me,—an essay upon the state of women in society; and its possible amelioration by means, at first, of institutions similar to the Flemish beguinages. You will feel an interest in this subject. I shall be little more than mason in this business, under the master architect. Rickman is a man of uncommon talents and knowledge, and political economy has been his favourite study: all calculations and facts requiring this knowledge he will execute. The part intended to impress upon the reader the necessity of alleviating the evil which he sees enforced, will be mine; for Rickman would write too strictly and too closely for the public taste. You probably know the nature of the beguinages; they were female fraternities, where the members were engaged in some useful employments, and bound by no religious obligations. The object is to provide for the numerous class of women who want employment the means of respectable independence, by restoring to them those branches of business which the men have mischievously usurped, or monopolized, when they ought only to have shared.

O! what a country might this England become, did its government but wisely direct the strength, and wealth, and activity of the people! Every profession, every trade, is overstocked; there are more adventurers in each than possibly can find employment; hence poverty and crime. Do not misunderstand me as asserting this to be the sole cause, but it is the most frequent one. A system of colonization, that should offer an outlet for the superfluous activity of the country, would convert this into a cause of general good; and the blessings of civilization might be extended over the deserts that, to the disgrace of man, occupy so great a part of the world! Assuredly, poverty and the dread of poverty are the great sources of guilt. That country cannot be well regulated where

marriage is imprudence, where children are a burthen and a misfortune. A very, very small portion of this evil our plan, if established, will remove; but of great magnitude if separately considered. I am not very sanguine in my expectations of success, but I will do my best, in examining the evil and proposing a remedy. God bless you!—Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

11. To S T. COLERIDGE

Lisbon, May Day, 1800.

Here, then, we are, thank God! alive, and recovering from dreadful sickness. I never suffered so much at sea, and Edith was worse than I was; we scarcely ate or slept at all: but the passage was very fine and short; five days and a half brought us to our port, with light winds the whole of the way. The way was not, however, without alarm. On Monday morning, between five and six, the captain was awakened with tidings that a cutter was bearing down upon us, with English colours, indeed, but apparently a French vessel; we made a signal, which was not answered; we fired a gun, she did the same, and preparations were made for action. We had another Lisbon packet in company, mounting six guns; our own force was ten; the cutter was a match, and more, for both, but we did not expect to be taken. You may imagine Edith's terror, awakened on a sick bed—disturbed I should have said—with these tidings! The captain advised me to surround her with mattresses in the cabin, but she would not believe herself in safety there, and I lodged her in the cockpit, and took my station on the quarter-deck with a musket. How I felt I can hardly tell; the hurry of the scene, the sight of grape-shot, bar-shot, and other ingenious implements of this sort, made an undistinguishable mixture of feelings. The cutter bore down between us; I saw the smoke from her matches, we were so near, and not a man on board had the least idea but that an immediate action

was to take place. We hailed her; she answered in broken English, and passed on. ''Tis over!' cried somebody. 'Not yet!' said the captain; and we expected she was coming round as about to attack our comrade vessel. She was English, however, manned chiefly from Guernsey, and this explained her Frenchified language. You will easily imagine that my sensations, at the ending of the business, were very definable, —one honest simple joy that I was in a whole skin! I laid the musket in the chest with considerably more pleasure than I took it out. I am glad this took place; it has shown me what it is to prepare for action.

Four years' absence from Lisbon have given everything the varnish of novelty, and this, with the revival of old associations, makes me pleased with everything. Poor Manuel, too, is as happy as man can be to see me once more; here he stands at breakfast, and talks of his meeting me at Villa Franca, and what we saw at this place and at that, and hopes that whenever I go into the country he may go with me. It even amused me to renew my acquaintance with the fleas, who opened the campaign immediately on the arrival of a foreigner. We landed yesterday about ten in the morning, and took possession of our house the same night. Our house is very small, and thoroughly Portuguese; little rooms all doors and windows,—odd, but well calculated for coolness: from one window we have a most magnificent view over the river,—Almada hill, and the opposite shore of Alentejo, bounded by hills about the half mountain height of Malvern.

To-day is a busy day; we are arranging away our things, and seeing visitors: these visits must all be returned; there ends the ceremony, and then I may choose retirement. I hurry over my letters, for the sake of feeling at leisure to begin my employments. The voyage depriving me of all rest, and leaving me too giddy to sleep well, will, with the help of the fleas, break me in well for early rising. The work before me is almost of terrifying labour; folio after folio to be gutted, for the immense mass of collateral knowledge

which is indispensable: but I have leisure and inclination.

Edith, who has been looking half her time out of the window, has just seen 'really a decent-looking woman'; this will show you what cattle the passers-by must be. She has found out that there are no middle-aged women here, and it is true; like their climate, it is only summer and winter. Their heavy cloaks of thick woollen, like horsemen's coats in England, amuse her in this weather, as much as her clear muslin would amuse them in an English winter.

Thalaba will soon be finished. Rickman is my plenipotentiary with the booksellers for this. Pray send me your Plays. *Thalaba* finished, all my poetry, instead of being wasted in rivulets and ditches, shall flow into the great *Madoc* Mississippi river. I have with me your volume, *Lyrical Ballads*, Burns, and *Gebir*. Read *Gebir* again: he grows upon me.

My uncle's library is admirably stocked with foreign books. My plan is this: immediately to go through the chronicles in order, and then make a skeleton of the narrative; the timbers put together, the house may be furnished at leisure. It will be a great work, and worthy of all labour.

I am interrupted momentarily by visitors, like fleas, infesting a new-comer! Edith's spirits are mending: a handful of roses has made her forgive the stink of Lisbon; and the green peas, the oranges, &c., are reconciling her to a country for which nature has done so much. We are transported into your midsummer, your most luxuriant midsummer!—Plague upon that heart-stop, that has reminded me that this is a voyage of prescription as well as of pleasure. But I will get well; and you must join us, and return with us over the Pyrenees, and some of my dreams must be fulfilled!

God bless you! Write to me, and some long letters; and send me your *Christabell* and your *Three Graves*, and finish them on purpose to send them. Edith's love. I reach a long arm, and shake hands with you across the seas.—Yours, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

12. To Lieut. Southey, H.M.S. 'Bellona'

Sunday, June 15, 1800, *Lisbon.*

My dear Tom,—On Tuesday Rundell goes. To-morrow I have an engagement for the day, and lack of paper has till now prevented me from preparation; so now for a galloping letter!

Thursday last we saw the long-looked-for Procession of the Body of God. The Pix is carried in all other processions empty; in this only it has the wafer,—this is the only *Real Presence.* The Pix is a silver vessel; and our vulgarism, 'please the pigs,' which has sometimes puzzled me, is only a corruption, and that an easy one, of 'please the Pix'—the holiest church utensil. So much for the object of this raree-show. On the night preceding, the streets through which it is to pass are cleaned: the only miracle I ever knew the wafer perform is that of cleaning the streets of Lisbon: they are strewn with sand, and the houses hung with crimson damask, from top to bottom. When the morning arrived, the streets were lined with soldiers; they marched on, filing to the right and left: their new uniforms are put on this day, and their appearance was very respectable: this alone was a fine sight. We were in a house in one of the new streets, where the houses are high and handsome, and perfectly regular, and the street longer than Redcliffe Street, every window and balcony crowded, and the Portuguese all in full-dress; and of the finery of Portuguese full-dress you can have but very inadequate ideas: not a jewel in Lisbon but was displayed,—the rainbow would have been ashamed to be seen. The banners of the city and its various corporate trades led the way. I never saw banners so clumsily carried; they were stuck out with bars,—not suffered to play freely and wave with the wind, and roll out their beauties in light and shade: sticks were stuck at right angles in the poles to carry them by; nothing could be more awkward or more laborious for the bearers, some of

whom were walking backward like lobsters, and others crab-sidling along; then came a champion in armour, carrying a flag; God knows, his armour was heavy enough; and as both his arms were employed upon the flag, his horse was led. Here, also, I saw St. George, but not St. George of England! This was a Portuguese wooden St. George, his legs stiff and striding like a boot-jack, a man walking on each side to hold him on by the feet; his house, when he is at home, is the Castle, from whence he goes to the Duke of Cadaval's, where they dress his hat up with all their magnificent jewels for the procession, which he calls and returns on his way back. When the late king was dying, he had all the saints in Lisbon sent for, and this St. George was put to bed to him. The consultation produced no good effect.

Scarcely any part of the procession was more beautiful than a number of very fine led horses, their saddles covered with rich escutcheons. All the brotherhoods then walked,—an immense train of men in red or grey cloaks; and *all* the friars. Zounds, what a regiment! many of them fine young men, some few 'more fat than friars became', and others again as venerable figures as a painter could wish: among the bearded monks were many, so old, so meagre, so hermit-like in look, of such a bread-and-water diet appearance, that there needed no other evidence to prove they were indeed penitents, as austere as conscientious folly could devise. The knights of the different orders walked in their superb dresses—the whole patriarchal church in such robes! and after the Pix came the Prince himself, a group of nobles round him closing the whole. I never saw aught finer than this: the crowd closing behind, the whole street, as far as the eye could reach, above and below, thronged, flooded, with people—and the blaze of their dresses! and the music! I pitied the friars—it was hot, though temperate for the season, yet the sun was painful, and on their shaven heads; they were holding up their singing-books, or their hands, or their handkerchiefs,

or their cowls, to shade them. I have heard that it has been death to some of them in a hot season. Two years ago, at this very procession, a stranger received a stroke of the sun, and fell down apparently dead. The Irish friars got hold of him and carried him off to be buried. The coffins here are like a trunk, and the lid is left open during the funeral service; before it was over, the man moved—what then did the Paddies? Oh to be sure, and they could not bury him then! but they locked him in the church instead of calling assistance, and the next day the man was dead enough, and they finished the job!

Had this been well managed, it would have been one of the finest conceivable sights; but it was a long procession broken into a number of little pieces, so irregularly they moved. On the Prince, and the group about the Body of God—I like to translate it, that you may see the nakedness of the nonsensical blasphemy—they showered rose-leaves from the windows. The following day St. Anthony had a procession, and the trappings of the houses were ordered to remain for him: this was like the Lent processions, a perfect puppet-show—the huge idols of the people carried upon men's shoulders; there were two negro saints, carried by negroes—I smiled to think what black angels they must make. We have got another raree-show to see in honour of the Heart of Jesus; this will be on Friday next; and then we think of Cintra.

This has been a busy time for the Catholics. Saturday, the 7th of this month, as the Eve of Trinity Sunday, was a festival at the Emperor's head-quarters; his mountebank stage was illuminated, and pitch barrels blazing along the street, their flames flashing finely upon the broad flags that floated across the way. It was somewhat terrible; they were bonfires of superstition, and I could not help thinking how much better the spectators would have been pleased with the sight had there been a Jew, or a heretic like me, in every barrel. The scene was thronged with spectators, and to my great surprise I saw women walking in safety;

nothing like personal insult was attempted: the boys had their bonfires and fireworks, but they seemed to have no idea that mischief was amusement. The succeeding day, Trinity Sunday, was the termination of the Emperor's reign. His train was increased by a band of soldiers; he was crowned, and dined in public. The Emperor for the ensuing year was elected; and thus ends the mummery, till Lent, and feasting, and folly come round again. At Cascaes the Emperor is a man, and the farce more formal. There was a brother of John V, who delighted in blackguard mischief; he went to the Emperor, then on the throne, with the intention of kicking him down, or some such practical jest. The Emperor knew him, sat like an old senator when the Gauls approached, and held out his hand for the Prince to kiss; it effectually disconcerted him, and he growled out as he retired, 'the rascal plays his part better than I expected.'

In the course of a conversation, introduced by these processions, I said to a lady, who remembers the auto-da-fés, 'What a dreadful day it must have been for the English when one of these infernal executions took place!' 'No,' she said, 'not at all; it was like the processions, expected as a fine sight, and the English, whose houses overlooked the streets through which they passed, kept open house as now, and made entertainments!!' They did not, indeed, see the execution,—that was at midnight; but they should have shut up their houses, and, for the honour of their own country, have expressed all silent abhorrence. Did such an event take place now, I should shake the dust from my feet, and curse the city, and leave it for ever! What is it that has prevented these Catholic bonfires? I do not understand. The constitution and the people never were more bigoted; and the dislike of Pombal would, after his disgrace, have only been a motive for reviving them. Is it that the priests themselves and the nobles have grown irreligious? Perhaps the books of Voltaire may have saved many a poor Jew from the flames.

Portugal is certainly improving, but very, very, very slowly. The factories have been long declining in opulence; and the Portuguese, who had some years since no merchants of note, have now the most eminent and wealthy in the place. They are beginning to take the profits themselves, which they had suffered us to reap: this is well, and as it should be; but they have found out that Cintra is a fine place, and are buying up the houses there as they are vacant, so that they will one day dispossess the English, and this I do not like. Cintra is too good a place for the Portuguese. It is only fit for us Goths—for Germans or English.

Your *Thalaba* is on the stocks. You will have it some six months before it can possibly be printed, and this is worth while. I this morning finished the Tenth Book—only two more; and at the end of a journey Hope always quickens my speed. Farewell. I am hurried, and you must and may excuse (as Rundell is postman extraordinary) a sheet not quite filled. God bless you! Edith's love. R. S.

13. To Lieut. Southey, H.M.S. 'Bellona'

June 22, 1800.

My dear Tom,—We are just returned from a bull-feast, and I write to you while the feelings occasioned by this spectacle are fresh. I had never before seen one. The buffoonery of teasing bullocks at Madrid was rather foolish than cruel, and its extreme folly excited laughter, as much at the spectators as the thing itself. This is widely different. The handbill was pompous:—'Antonio de Cordeiro, who had so distinguished himself last year, was again to perform. The entertainment would deserve the approbation of a generous public. Ten bulls were to be killed, four to be tormented; they were picked bulls, of the Marquis de ——'s breed (I forget his name), and chosen out for their courage and ferocity.' Yesterday the bull-fighters paraded the streets, as you may

have seen rope-dancers and the 'equestrian troop' at Bristol fair; they were strangely disfigured with masques; one fellow had a paunch and a Punch-hump-back, and all were dressed in true tawdry style. Hot weather is always the season, and Sunday always the day, the amusement being cool and devout! At half after four it began: the hero was on horseback, and half a dozen men on foot to assist him; about ten more sat with pitchforks to defend themselves, ready when wanted: the bulls were all in the area till the amusement opened; they were not large, and not the same breed as in England; they had more the face of the cow than the short sulky look of gentlemen,—quiet, harmless animals, whom a child might safely have played with, and a woman would have been ashamed to fear. So much for their *ferocity!* Courage, indeed, they possessed; they attacked only in self-defence, and you would, like me, have been angry to see a fellow with a spear, provoking a bull whose horns were tipped with large balls, the brave beast, all bleeding with wounds, still facing him with reluctant resistance: once I saw crackers stuck into his neck to irritate him, and heard them burst in his wounds; you will not wonder that I gave the Portuguese a hearty and honest English curse. It is not an affair of courage; the horse is trained, the bull's horns muffled, and half a dozen fellows, each ready to assist the other, and each with a cloak, on which the poor animal wastes his anger: they have the rails to leap over, also, and they know that when they drop the cloak he aims always at that; there is therefore little danger of a bruise, and none of anything else. The amusement is therefore as cowardly as cruel. I saw nine killed; the first wound sickened Edith, and my own eyes were not always fixed upon the area. My curiosity was not, perhaps, strictly excusable, but the pain which I endured was assuredly penalty enough. The fiercest of the whole was one of the four who were only tormented; two fellows on asses attacked him with goads, and he knocked them over and over with much spirit;

two more came on, standing each in the middle of a painted horse, ridiculously enough—and I fancy those fellows will remember him for the next fortnight whenever they turn in bed—and their sham horses were broken to pieces. Three dogs were loosed at another bull, and effectually sickened. I hate bulldogs; they are a surly, vicious breed, ever ready to attack, mischievous and malicious enough to deserve parliamentary praise from Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Canning. A large theatre was completely full; men, women, and children were clapping their hands at every wound, and watching with delight the struggles of the dying beasts. It is a damnable sport! and much to the honour of the English here they all dislike it—very rarely does an Englishman or Englishwoman witness it a second time.

You will find in *Thalaba* one accurate image which I observed this evening: a death-sweat *darkening the dun hide* of the animal. This amusement must have mischievous effects; it makes cruelty familiar: and as for the assertion, that bull-baiting, or bull-butchering, keeps up the courage of the nation, only Wyndham and Canning could have been absurd enough and unfeeling enough to believe it;—if it were true, the Spaniards ought to be the bravest nation in the world, because their amusement is the most cruel; and a butcher ought to make the best soldier.

On Thursday we go to Cintra; this, therefore, will be my last letter of Lisbon anecdote. In Africa a Portuguese saw an ouran-outang, the most human beast that has yet been discovered, walking quietly with a stick in his hand; he had the wickedness to shoot him, and was not, as he ought to have been, hung for wilful murder. The head and hands were sent here; I have seen them in the Museum, in spirits. I have seen many an uglier fellow pass for a man, in spite of the definition that makes him a reasoning animal: he has eyebrows, and a woolly head, almost like a negro's, but the face not black.

Fielding died and was buried here. By a singular

fatality, four attempts have been made to erect a monument, and all have miscarried. A Frenchman set on foot a subscription for this purpose, and many of the factory engaged for one, two, or three moidores; circumstances took him from Lisbon, and this dropped. Another Frenchman had a monument made at his own expense, and paid for it; there was a fine French inscription, that, as his own countrymen had never given the great Fielding a monument, it was reserved for a Frenchman to honour his country by paying that respect to genius: he also went away, and is now following the French Pretender; and his monument lies among masonry and rubbish, where I have sought for it in vain. Then De Visme undertook the affair; and the bust of Fielding, designed for this purpose, is still in the house which belonged to him here. I know not what made this scheme abortive. Last, the Prince of Brazil went to work, and the monument was made. The Lady Abbess of the New Convent wished to see it; it was sent to her; she took a fancy to it, and there it has remained ever since: and Fielding is still without a monument.

De Visme introduced the present fashion of painting rooms in stucco, with landscapes on the walls, and borders of flowers or arabesque; the fashion is, I believe, Italian. The workmen whom he employed had taste enough to be pleased with it, and it is general in all new houses. The ceilings are now painted; thus, instead of the huge layer of boards which was usual, nothing can look more cool, or be more convenient, for a cloth and soap cleans it.

In the larger old houses, here and in Spain, in the country, there is usually a room with no windows, but, instead, arches quite open to the air; the appearance is strange and picturesque, and I should esteem it one of the inconveniences of Lisbon, that the intolerable dust prevents the enjoyment of these open rooms there—the dust is a huge evil. We had the hot wind for three days this week; a detestable burning blast, a bastard sort of siroc, tamed by crossing the sea and

the land, but which parches the lips, and torments you with the Tantalus plague of fanning your cheek and heating it at the same time. The sea breeze is, on the other hand, as delightful: we feel it immediately; it cools the air, and freshens up all our languid feelings. In the West Indies they call this wind the doctor—a good seamanly phrase for its healing and comfortable effect.

At the time the aqueduct was built, a large reservoir was made for its waste water. In winter, much water runs to waste; in summer, more is wanted, and the watermen wait a long time round the fountain before they can in turn fill their barrels: but these people, in building the reservoir, never calculated the weight of the water till the building was finished,—so it stands still uncovered, a useless pile, and a rare monument of the national science. I saw a funeral from the country pass the window at night, the attendants holding torches, and the body in the trunk coffin carried upon a litter (that is, like a sedan chair carried by mules instead of men).

The servants here, in marketing, think it a part of their fair profits to cheat you as much as they can, and have no idea that this is dishonesty; it is a sort of commission they think they are entitled to. This is so much the case, that one of these fellows, when he was stipulating about wages, thought them too little, and inquired if he was to go to market; he was told yes, and then he said he would come.

The Queen's stables serve as an asylum. Rogues and murderers go there and do the work for nothing; they are safe by this means, and the people whose business it is to hire and pay the servants pocket the money, so that they infest the neighbourhood: they quarrelled with our dragoons, who broke into the stables and thrashed them heartily, to the great satisfaction of the people near. God bless you! Edith's love.—Yours,

R. S.

14. To Charles Danvers

Cintra, July 25, 1800.

I have in my life received so many letters to disturb and distress me, that I never open one without some kind of fear. Poor Peggy! her disease I thought incurable, but still it was intermitting, and its long intervals might be intervals of enjoyment. She would always be dependent; but I am looking on to better days, and trusted that at some, no very remote time, I should be able to settle her as I wished. This intelligence will haunt and hurt me. Recovered as I am, still my mind is in a state of childish weakness. My uncle was ill lately with a sick headache. I was not aware that he is subject to them, and lay awake the whole night listening to hear him breathe; the consequence was that the startings and head-seizures returned. It was not merely climate that I wished to seek as medicinal,—it was the plunging into new scenes, the total abandonment of all irksome thoughts and employments. It has succeeded. My spirits have been as my letters exhibited them. The loss of a Miss Barker here damped me for some days, and they will not now soon recover their tone. The death of Patty Cottle I expected as certain. Mr. Morgan's, too, I thought inevitably near. These have happened—and I have only been three months in Portugal! Thank God you give us no bad accounts of your mother. I have many friends in England, but none whom I hope more earnestly to see again. But to change the subject. As the post brought me no letters from Bristol we were vexed, angry with all our friends, but wondering that Danvers had not written; and indeed I had sent to Lisbon to have particular inquiry made at the office, thinking there certainly must be a letter from you. The packet reached me this morning. I pray you remember that, and take pattern. I am among *acquaintance*, and cannot hear too frequently from my friends. We had a delightful companion for a short

time here—a Miss Barker, brimful of everything that was good. She is returned to England, but we do not lose her acquaintance. Coleridge has never written to me: where no expectation existed there can be no disappointment. Wynn sent me Sir Herbert Croft's Letter, now printed separately: woe to him when the *Chatterton* is printed! He cannot irritate me, and I can therefore chastise him with cool and just severity. I am busy in correcting *Thalaba*, to send over for the press. The copying-machine never came: Bedford manages everything badly. *Thalaba* does not monopolize me in the way poor Cottle seems to be monopolized. The latter books will soon reach you on their way to Wynn. It is a good job done, and so I have thought of another, and another, and another; but my books are in England, and I cannot begin to build without having the bricks and mortar at hand.

We are enjoying Cintra, a place that wants only fresh butter and genial society to make it an earthly paradise. We ride a good deal upon asses, and Edith has made a great proficiency in *asswomanship*, riding without the great armed-chair, which female strangers generally use. For the most part the English dwell in the town, where they idle away their time in visiting their idle acquaintance. I saw Miss Barker suffering this insufferable annoyance with martyr patience. We happily are far from the town, and not in the road of their rides, so that it must be an especial intention to see us that brings any visitors here; and half a mile up and down half a dozen stony hills in hot weather operates well upon people who do but half like me, and whom I do not like at all. My uncle is here less than we could wish; business detains him in the heat of Lisbon. I have then much leisure; but even here, cool, heavenly cool, as Cintra is compared to the metropolis, the weather is hot enough to give me a true Portuguese and irresistible indolence. For the last ten days we have been most unusually hot. The cursed sirocs of the East reach us here, tamed indeed by their passing over sea and land, but still hot as if they had breathed through

an oven, or like the very breath of Beelzebub. I have spent my mornings half-naked, in a wet room dozing upon the bed, my right hand not daring to touch my left. At night we look with as much hope for a fog as you in England watch for a fine day. When the mountain has his nightcap on, then are we so cool! so freshened into comfort! A few nights since the fog came on with a sublimity beyond my ideas of fog-magnificence: it came rolling on one huge close mass of mist and darkness from the ocean. It was terrible—for we were on the hill, yet in the daylight; and it moved on having night behind it. The palace on which we looked down, not a quarter of a mile distant, was completely involved and hidden. While we looked at it, it rolled like a river along the valley;—like the march of a victorious army, wherever it moved, all seemed to be destroyed. We had been panting all day like frogs in a dry ditch, and we returned wet and cold from our walk.

I can give you no idea of the beauty of Cintra; for in England you have no parts that can help you to an image of the whole. There is little doubt that it is a mountain shattered or formed by a volcano. We crossed it with Miss Barker, and in consequence of losing ourselves had a six hours' ramble. The day was fine. We had cold beef with us, and enjoyed our situation,—only the wild rocky mountain, in whose depths we were lost, to be seen, and the sea beyond it. We were at one time completely without a track, and the asses would not move. You will be amused by the stratagem which set my beast going again. I was lugging him by the head, and the boy pushing him by the rump, to no purpose. John wrinkled his nose, held up his head, threw his huge ears forward, and there he stood in the true attitude of obstinacy and defiance. What did we but set him astride a furze bush, it was the best spur in the world; on he went, and his companions followed him. It was six o'clock before we got home to dinner, and our adventure furnished subject for conversation and the astonishment of uplifted hands and eyes among the good people who came to Cintra to

play a cool rubber at whist or casino. I had joined Edith and Miss B. that morning at a country house (Quinta they call it) of the Marquis Marialva's. The woman who let me in inquired 'if I wanted to see the shoemaker'! I imagined that one of the servants who lived in the house to take care of it might be of the gentle craft and wanted my custom, and answered, 'No.' After seeing the garden, and admiring the taste which had decorated it with statues—a soldier painted like life, a bear eating a dog, a goat reading in a large folio, and a woman whose marble petticoats were blown up to show no very well-shaped leg—we were led to a hut in the garden, round which all the children in the neighbourhood and the whole household had assembled in expectation. The door was opened, and there was the shoemaker! It was a figure large as life, an old man sewing at his trade, a hideous old woman by him spinning, a boy hammering the sole, and another behind beating a tambourine, all moved by turning a wheel behind: and this is the admiration of the country and the masterpiece of Portuguese mechanism! The Marquis has bought another house in the neighbourhood, and there he is about to remove this jewel: it is said also that he means to have a tailor made.

My uncle has been robbed of his hat lately. Some of them attacked him. It was in sight of many people, and this was probably the cause that he escaped so well. A Portuguese officer, passing by just after, inquired what was the matter, and when it was over coolly remarked 'people must live', and walked on. A ship was cut out of the river lately, of great value, and it was at first believed by Portuguese. The remark made by a company of these people, when they heard the circumstances, was, that 'the times were very hard'. You can have no idea of a more total anarchy than exists here as to all rational purposes of government. There is actually no security whatever for persons or property: if a rascal is taken up for robbery or murder, after a few days' imprisonment he is let out again without trial or punishment. A

priest in one of the new streets was stopped by the watch lately, who robbed him of his purse, and his watch, and his buckles. He returned home, which was very near, put on his servant's clothes, took a pistol and a knife under his cloak, returned to the same street, and met the same watchmen. They stopped him, questioned him, searched him, found the knife and pistol, and carried him before a magistrate. Then he told his story, recovered all he had lost, and had the satisfaction of seeing the rascals sent to prison.

Do not forget to make Cottle send me three quires of the wove foolscap with Alfred. My mother says Bill has a parcel to send to me. What can he mean? I pray you take care to make no blunder, and send anything of weight by post. A magazine sent that way would cost me ten guineas. Wynn sent me a bundle of letters from the Secretary of State's office, like a blockhead, and they cost me fourteen shillings. The way the plays came, through Yescombe, is the only way. The plays are done so as only Coleridge could have done them. I recognize him also in the Essay on Schiller, and the prelude of *Wallenstein's Camp*, advertised in the newspaper as in the press. Remember me to all who inquire for me—Mr. Rowe in particular. To Cottle and Davy, if time permit, I shall write by this packet. Pray, pray write often. Tell Charles Fox I might as well look for Persian MSS. in Kamschatka as in Lisbon. Flower-seeds would be useless here. I have no friend; and gardens require too much labour in watering to be used here as in England. God bless you. Edith's love.—Yours truly,

R. S.

15. To C. W. W. Wynn

Lisbon, Feb. 21, 1801.

My dear Wynn,—Your letter gave me the first detail of the great news. A passage of four days made it as fresh as possible, and we are here cursing winds and water that we must wait a fortnight before another

mail can reach us. What will happen? the breach is made; and this lath and plaster cannot long keep out the weather. Will the old administration be strong enough to force their plans upon the Crown? Possibly. Equally so, that the art of alarming, in which they were so proficient, may now be turned successfully against them. Yet, on this point, the whole body of Opposition is with them, and the whole intellect of the country. I rather expect, after more inefficient changes, the establishment of Opposition—and peace. The helm requires a strong hand.

Decidedly as my own principles lead to toleration, I yet think in the sufferance of converts and proselytism it has been carried too far. You might as well let a fire burn or a pestilence spread, as suffer the propagation of popery. I hate and abhor it from the bottom of my soul, and the only antidote is poison. Voltaire and such writers cut up the wheat with the tares. The monastic establishments in England ought to be dissolved; as for the priests, they will, for the most part, find their way into France; they who remain should not be suffered to recruit, and would soon die away in peace. I half fear a breach of the Union, perhaps another rebellion, in that wretched country.

I do not purpose returning till the year of my house-rent be complete, and shall then leave Lisbon with regret, in spite of English-house comforts, and the all-in-all happiness of living among old friends and familiar faces. This climate so completely changes my whole animal being, that I would exchange everything for it. It is not Lisbon;—Italy, or the south of Spain or of France, would, perhaps, offer greater inducements, if the possibility of a foreign settlement existed.

On my *History* no labour shall be spared. Now, I only heap marble: the edifice must be erected in England; but I must return again to the quarry. You will find my style plain and short, and of condensed meaning,—plain as a Doric building, and, I

trust, of eternal durability. The notes will drain off all quaintness. I have no doubt of making a work by which I shall be honourably remembered. You shall see it, and Elmsley if he will take the trouble, before publication. Of profit I must not be sanguine; yet, if it attain the reputation of Robertson, than whom it will not be worse, or of Roscoe and Gibbon, it will procure me something more substantial than fame. My price for *Thalaba* was, for 1,000 copies, £115, twelve copies being allowed me; the booksellers would have bargained for a quarto edition also, but it would have been ill-judged to have glutted the public.

I expect, in the ensuing winter, to be ready with my first volume: to hurry it would be injudicious, and historic labour will be relieved by employing myself in correcting *Madoc*. My intention is therefore to journey through North Wales next summer to the Lakes, where Coleridge is settled, and to pass the autumn (their summer) there. For a Welsh map of the roads, and what is to be seen, you must be my director; perhaps, too, you might in another way assist *Madoc*, by pointing out what manners or superstition of the Welsh would look well in blank verse. Much may have escaped me, and some necessarily must. Long as this poem (from the age of fourteen) has been in my head, and long as its sketch has now lain by me, I now look on at no very distant date to its publication, after an ample revision and recasting. You will see it and scrutinize it when corrected.

Thalaba is now a whole and unembarrassed story; the introduction of Laila is not an episode, it is so connected with the murder of Hodeirah and the after actions of Thalaba, as to be essentially part of the tale. *Thalaba* has certainly and inevitably the fault of *Samson Agonistes*,—its parts might change place; but, in a romance, epic laws may be dispensed with; its faults now are verbal: such as it is, I know no poem which can claim a place between it and the *Orlando*. Let it be weighed with the *Oberon*; perhaps, were I to speak out, I should not dread a trial with Ariosto.

My proportion of ore to dross is greater: perhaps the Anti-Jacobin criticasters may spare *Thalaba*; it is so utterly innocent of all good drift; it may pass through the world like Richard Cromwell, notwithstanding the sweet savour of its father's name. Do you know that they have caricatured me between Fox and Norfolk—worshipping Bonaparte? Poor me—at Lisbon—who have certainly molested nothing but Portuguese spiders! Amen! I am only afraid my company will be ashamed of me; one at least,—he is too good for me; and, upon my soul, I think myself too good for the other.

The Spanish ambassador trundled off for Madrid this morning—he is a bad imitation of a hogshead in make: all is alarm here; and I sweat in dreadfully cold weather for my books, creditors, alas for many a six-and-thirty! We have two allies, more faithful than Austria the honest or Paul the magnanimous,—famine and the yellow fever; but the American gentleman is asleep till summer, and, as for famine, she is as busy in England as here. I rejoice in the eventual effects of scarcity—the cultivation of the wastes; the population bills you probably know to be Rickman's, for which he has long been soliciting Rose, and the management is his of course and compliment. It is of important utility.

Of the red wines I spoke in my last. Will you have Bucellas as it can be got? It should be kept rather in a garret than a cellar, a place dry and warm; but ample directions shall be sent with it. You may, perhaps, get *old* now, when so just an alarm prevails; *new* is better than none, because it will improve even in ideal value, should Portugal be closed to England; its price will little, if at all, differ from Port or Lisbon; it is your vile taxes that make the expense; and, by the by, I must vent a monstrous oath against the duty upon foreign books. *Sixpence per pound weight* if bound; it is abominable!—Farewell, and God bless you. Yours affectionately, R. SOUTHEY.

16. To John May

Lisbon, May 23, 1801.

My dear Friend,—A letter of mine, chiefly relating to Henry, must assuredly have been lost: it matters little. At this distance, all I could do was to express a full satisfaction in what you and William Taylor have agreed. To Henry I wrote some five or six weeks ago, recommending an unbiassed choice,—rather wishing him to follow his uncle's plan, than advising it. Of his private allowance, I could only promise him £5 quarterly, a sum which, if good fortune enabled me, I should willingly double, but which you must be aware, knowing the extent of my resources, to be the utmost that I can spare from my own wants and the demands upon me from other quarters. Some little—a possible £10—may be yearly hoped from Tom, who is ready to do all he can. My uncle will, I know, supply any deficiency. Yet I think, in calculating from £30 to £40 yearly as necessary, circumstances have not been sufficiently considered. My own personal expenses have never reached even to the smaller sum. I do not expend £15 yearly on the whole of my dress. With all linen Henry would be supplied from home. It is, however, always better to allow a young man too much than too little: I have felt the latter evil myself. The great expense of returning will sink me for some time below the world; hitherto my resources have always been kept equal with my expenditure, by obscure and unintermitted labour. From these means a residence here has inevitably cut me off; my expenses also have been increased by travelling. I could, indeed, make my journeys more than pay their own cost, did I deem it advisable to publish the materials which I have collected for a miscellaneous volume relative to this country. From £60 to £80 would doubtless be paid me for a first edition; but from the time it would deduct from the greater work, I should think it a bad speculation in a pecuniary point of view, and in that point I must consider it. I have, therefore, no literary

pay to expect (except from the success of *Thalaba*) till a first volume of my history be published, or ready for publication, a labour for which one complete year will be little. Meantime I can review. I can write rhymes to the amount of £100; but this is improvident work—it is spending the day in getting only enough for the dinner. Like you good people in England, I have corn enough in the ground, but there is a famine till the harvest be ripe.

Portuguese news you know as regularly and correctly as it can be known; yet is Mr. Coppendale an infidel; incredulity saves him from the fear-fever which infects everybody else. I believe, at all events, except a general peace speedily terminates the calamities of Europe, that the port of Lisbon will be shut against English vessels. St. Cyr is with the Spaniards, about Elvas, which is or will be besieged. We had a rumour of its capture, which is not believable. They are in great force, and have refused to write any terms in the *carte blanche* which Pinto proffered: so far is certain. When the moon shines upon the sea, the line of moonlight always terminates in your own ship,—so we view all things chiefly with relation to self. I want my uncle to return to England, but verily believe him so rooted here, that he must be turned out, or he never will move. For ourselves, the sooner we are home the better. I am inquiring for a vessel Bristol bound. If there be none we shall return by Yescombe, when next he is here. But the difference of expense is to me of heavy importance—it cannot be less than thirty guineas. We have now lost most of our hill acquaintance; in Miss Seton, particularly, we have a daily and hourly loss. 'Tis like the end of the *Pilgrim's Progress*—one by one our friends go before us, and leave us at the side of the Great Water that we all must cross.

I am no ways weary of Portugal; it would be the country of my choice residence certainly—its climate so entirely suits me; and its materials now afford me such ample employment, that I could beguile a more total solitude than that in which we live. It is almost

a solitude,—and I look with a hunger and thirst for the free and intimate society of my English friends—of those who can look back with the same recollections, observe the present with the same feelings, and look on to futurity with the same hopes.

My *History* advances well; I have stewed down many a folio into essential sauce. Half the labour of a first volume is done, that is, the timbers are ready and the stones are hewn, though little of the edifice appears above ground. To the end of Fernando's reign, the first sketch is done; the second draught to that of Dinez. The third and decent copy is now finishing the second Sancho. My guides have been Faria, Duarte, Galoao, and Ruy de Pina, Duarte Nunes, Mariana, the Rainhas of Barbosa,—Zurita step by step. The Provas of the genealogical history have been indispensably useful; the Monarquia Lusitana I have not yet been able to procure; and, indeed, the books already named, with the number of others collaterally consulted, were enough to carry on at first.

God bless you. I do not ask you to write: there will, I trust, be no time to hear from you. When three months are elapsed from the time when you sent Harry the £10 have the goodness to send him £5. I will do all I can to prevent him from feeling any inconvenience for money—even any unpleasant feeling; but these are my worst times. I live at more cost here than at home, and have running expenses in England also. Harry will I hope do well,—he promises well. We have yet no accounts of Tom here, though two packets have arrived since that that brought his name in the list of the wounded. God bless you.—Yours truly,

R. Southey.

17. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

August 19, 1801.

My dear Grosvenor,—The tone and temper of your letter left me in an uncomfortable mood;—certainly I deserved it—as far as negligence deserves reproof so

harsh;—but indeed, Grosvenor, you have been somewhat like the Scotch judge, who included all rape, robbery, murder, and horse-stealing under the head of sedition; so have you suspected negligence of cloaking a cold, and fickle, and insincere heart. Dear, dear Grosvenor, if by any magic of ear you could hear how often your name passes my lips! or could you see how often I see your figure in my walks—the recollections—and the wishes—but what are these? A hundred times should I have begun a letter if there had been enough to fill it,—if I could have sent you the exquisite laugh when I again saw St. Augustine and his load,—or the smile when I read Saunders' death in the newspaper;—but these are unwriteable things—the gossip, and the playfulness, and the boyishness, and the happiness:—I was about to write, however,—in conscience and truth I was—and for an odd reason. I heard a gentleman imitate Henderson; and there was in that imitation a decisiveness of pronunciation, a rolling every syllable over the tongue, a force and pressure of lip and of palate, that had my eyes been shut I could have half believed you had been reading Shakespeare to me,—and I was about to tell you so, because the impression was so strong.

With Drummond it seems I go not, but he and Wynn design to get for me—or try to get—a better berth;—that of Secretary to some Italian Legation, which is permanent, and not personally attached to the minister. Amen. I love the south, and the possibility highly pleases me, and the prospect of advancing my fortunes. To England I have no strong tie; the friends whom I love live so widely apart that I never see two in a place; and for acquaintance, they are to be found everywhere. Thus much for the future; for the present I am about to move to Coleridge, who is at the Lakes;—and I am labouring, somewhat blindly indeed, but all to some purpose, about my ways and means; for the foreign expedition that has restored my health, has at the same time picked my pocket; and if I had not good spirits and cheerful industry,

I should be somewhat surly and sad. So I am—I hope most truly and ardently for the last time—pen-and-inking for supplies, not from pure inclination. I am rather heaping bricks and mortar than building; hesitating between this plan and that plan, and preparing for both. I rather think it will end in a romance, in metre Thalabian,—in mythology Hindoo,—by name the *Curse of Kehama*, on which name you may speculate; and if you have any curiosity to see a crude outline, the undeveloped life-germ of the egg, say so, and you shall see the story as it is, and the poem as it is to be, written piecemeal.

Thus, then, is my time employed, or thus it ought to be; for how much is dissipated by going here and there,—dinnering, and tea-taking, and suppering, traying, or eveninging, take which phrase of fashion pleases you,—you may guess.

Grosvenor, I perceive no change in myself, nor any symptoms of change; I differ only in years from what I was, and years make less difference in me than in most men. All things considered, I feel myself a fortunate and happy man; the future wears a better face than it has ever done, and I have no reason to regret that indifference to fortune which has marked the past. By the by, it is unfortunate that you cannot come to the sacrifice of one law book—my whole proper stock—whom I design to take up to the top of Mount Etna, for the express purpose of throwing him down straight to the devil. Huzza, Grosvenor! I was once afraid that I should have a deadly deal of law to forget whenever I had done with it; but my brains, God bless them, never received any, and I am as ignorant as heart could wish. The tares would not grow.

You will direct to Keswick, Cumberland. I set off on Saturday next, and shall be there about Tuesday; and if you could contrive to steal time for a visit to the Lakes, you would find me a rare guide.

If you have not seen the second volume of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*, I counsel you to buy them, and read *aloud* the poems entitled 'The Brothers',

and 'Michael'; which, especially the first, are, to my taste, excellent. I have never been so much affected, and so *well*, as by some passages there. God bless you. Edith's remembrance.—Yours as ever,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

18. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, Sept. 6, 1801.

De Anthologia, which is of or concerning the Anthology. As I hope to be picking up lava from Etna, I cannot be tying up nosegays here in England; but blind Tobin, whom you know,—God bless him for a very good fellow!—but Tobin the blind is very unwilling that no more anthologies should appear; wherefore there will be more volumes, with which all I shall have to do will be to see that large-paper copies be printed to continue sets,—becoming myself only a gentleman contributor: to which ingenious publication I beg your countenance, sir, and support. You ask me questions about my future plans which I cannot readily answer, only that if I got a decent salary abroad, even should my health take a fancy to this queer climate, I have no estate to retire to at home, and so shall have a good prudential reason for remaining there. My dreams incline to Lisbon as a resting-place; I am really attached to the country, and, odd as it may seem, to the people. In Lisbon they are, like all metropolitans, roguish enough, but in the country I have found them hospitable, even to kindness, when I was a stranger and in want. The consulship at Lisbon would, of all possible situations, best delight me,—better than a grand consulship,—'tis a good thousand a year. But when one is dreaming, you know, Grosvenor——

These lakes are like rivers; but oh for the Mondego and the Tagus! And these mountains, beautifully indeed are they shaped and grouped; but oh for the great Monchique! and for Cintra, my paradise!—the heaven on earth of my hopes; and if ever I should

have a house at Cintra, as in earnest sincerity I do hope I shall, will not you give me one twelvemonth, and eat grapes, and ride donkeys, and be very happy? In truth, Grosvenor, I have lived abroad too long to be contented in England: I miss southern luxuries,—the fruits, the wines; I miss the sun in heaven, having been upon a short allowance of sunbeams these last ten days; and if the nervous fluid be the galvanic fluid, and the galvanic fluid the electric fluid, and the electric fluid condensed light, zounds! what an effect must these vile dark rainy clouds have upon a poor nervous fellow, whose brain has been in a state of high illumination for the last fifteen months!

God bless you! I am going in a few days to meet Wynn at Liverpool, and then to see the Welsh lions. Grosvenor Bedford, I wish you would write a history, for, take my word for it, no employment else is one thousandth part so interesting. I wish you would try it. We want a Venetian history. I would hunt Italy for your materials, and help you in any imaginable way. Think about it, and tell me your thoughts.—Yours affectionately, R. SOUTHEY.

19. To JOHN RICKMAN

London, Nov. 20, 1801.

The chancellor and the scribe go on in the same way. The scribe has made out a catalogue of all books published since the commencement of '97 upon finance and scarcity; he hath also copied a paper written by J. R., containing some Irish alderman's hints about oak bark; and nothing more hath the scribe done in his vocation. Duly he calls at the chancellor's door; sometimes he is admitted to immediate audience; sometimes kicketh his heels in the antechamber (once he kicked them for cold, but now there is a fire); sometimes a gracious message emancipates him for the day. Secrecy hath been enjoined him as to these state proceedings. On three subjects he is directed to read and research—corn-laws, finance, tithes, according to

their written order. Alas! they are heathen Greek to the scribe! He hath, indeed, in days of old, read Adam Smith, and remembereth the general principle established; he presupposeth that about corn, as about everything else, the fewer laws the better: of finance he is even more ignorant: concerning the tithes, something knoweth he of the Levitical law, somewhat approveth he of a commutation for land, something suspecteth he why they are to be altered; gladly would the people buy off the burthen, gladly would the government receive the purchase money,—the scribe seeth objections thereunto. Meantime, sundry are the paragraphs that have been imprinted respecting the chancellor and the scribe; they have been compared (in defiance of the Butleraboo statute) to Empson and Dudley; and Peter Porcupine hath civilly expressed a hope that the poet will make no false *numbers* in his new work: sometimes the poet is called a Jacobin; at others it is said that his opinions are revolutionized: the chancellor asked him if he would enter a reply in that independent paper whose lying name is the *True Briton*, a paper over which the chancellor implied he had some influence; the poet replied 'No, that those flea-bites itched only if they were scratched': the scribe hath been courteously treated, and introduced to a Mr. Ormsby; and this is all he knoweth of the home politics.

Εὑρηκα. Εὑρηκα. Εὑρηκα.

You remember your heretical proposition *de Cambro-Britannis*—that the Principality had never produced, and never could produce, a great man; that I opposed Owen Glendower and Sir Henry Morgan to the assertion in vain. But I have found the great man, and not merely the great man, but the *maximus homo*, the μεγιστος ἀνθρωπος, the μεγιστοτατος—we must create a super-superlative to reach the idea of his magnitude. I found him in the Strand, in a shop-window, laudably therein exhibited by a Cambro-Briton; the engraver represents him sitting in a room, that seems to be

a cottage, or, at best, a farm, pen in hand, eyes uplifted, and underneath is inscribed—

'The Cambrian Shakespear.'

But woe is me for my ignorance! the motto that followed surpassed my skill in language, though it doubtless was a delectable morsel from that great Welshman's poems. You must, however, allow the justice of the name for him, for all his writings are in Welsh; and the Welshmen say that he is as great a man as Shakespeare, and they must know, because they can understand him. I inquired what might be the trivial name of this light and lustre of our dark age, but it hath escaped me; but that it meant, being interpreted, either Thomas Denbigh, or some such everyday baptismal denomination. And now am I no prophet if you have not, before you have arrived thus far, uttered a three-worded sentence of malediction. To-day I dine with Lord Holland: Wynn is intimate with him, and my invitation is for the sake of *Thalaba*. The sale of *Thalaba* is slow—about 300 only gone.—Yours truly, R. Southey.

20. To John Rickman

25 *Bridge Street, Westminster,*
Nov. 27, 1801.

My dear Rickman,—This morning I called on Burnett, whom I found recovering from a bilious flux, and in the act of folding up a letter designed for you. He then, for the first time, showed me your letter, and his reply. I perceived that the provoking blunder in Lamb's direction affected the tone of yours, and that the seventeen shillings' worth of anger fell upon George. Your caustic was too violent. It eat through the proud flesh, but it has also wounded the feeling and healthy part below. The letter, which I have suppressed, was in the same style as his last. I prevailed on him to lay it up in his desk, because it was no use showing you the wound you had inflicted.

Your time would be better anyhow employed than in reading full pages that were not written with the design of giving pleasure. That your phrases were too harsh I think, and Lamb and Mary Lamb think also. 'Twas a horse-medicine, a cruel dose of yellow-*gamboodge* (though I do not mean to insinuate that it occasioned his diarrhoea).

What I foresaw, or rather hoped would take place, is now going on in him. He begins to discover that hackneying authorship is not the way to be great—to allow that six hours' writing in a public office is *better* than the same number of hours' labour for a fat publisher—that it is more certain, less toilsome, quite as respectable. I have even prevailed on him to attend to his handwriting, on the possibility of some such happy appointment, and doubt not ere long to convince him, in his own way, of the moral fitness of writing straight lines and distinct letters, according to all the laws of mind. He *wishes* to get a tutor's place. In my judgement a clerk's would suit him better, for its permanence. Nothing like experience! He would not think its duties beneath him; and if he were so set at ease from the daily bread-and-cheese anxieties that would disorder a more healthy intellect than his, I believe that passion for distinction which haunts him would make him, in the opinion of the world, the booksellers, and himself, a very pretty historian, quite as good as any of the Scotch breed. It puzzles me how he has learnt to round his sentences so ear-ticklingly. He has never rough-hewn anything, but he finishes like a first journeyman.

Write to him some day, and lay on an emollient plaister; it would heal him, and comfort him. A very active man we shall never have, but as active as nature will let him he soon will be, and quite enough for daily official work. If you could set him in the land of potatoes, we should, I believe in conscience, see the historian of the twelve Caesars become a great man. A more improbable prophecy of mine about the wretched Alfred has been fulfilled.

Mr. Corry and I have met once since my last, and no

mention was made about Egypt: the silence satisfied me, because Portugal is a better and far more suitable subject. It is odd that he has never asked me to dine with him, and not quite accordant with his general courtliness of conduct. Seeing little of him, I have not formed so high an opinion of his talents or information as you had led me to conceive; doubtless in his own department he possesses both, but on all other ground I am the better traveller; and he hardly knows the turnpike when I have beat through all the by-ways, and windings, and cross-roads. I found it expedient to send him my sundry books, in compliance with a hint to that effect. He called to thank me; and this dropping a card has been the extent of personal and avoidable civility. To my great satisfaction, I have entire leisure; that is to my *present* comfort—for it does not promise much for the future. I had nearly forgotten to ask you about the transfer to the library.

Your friend Vaughan Griffiths has got a few steps up the ladder. I do not mean the ladder which such-like honest gentlemen sometimes ascend. He has taken Remnant the German bookseller's stock, and announces a catalogue of foreign books. The Magazine exists—I certify its existence, having seen one for this month in a window: the spirit having left it, I suspect *vampirism* in its present life.

Coleridge is in town. You should commute your *Star* for the *Morning Post*, in which you will see good things from him, and such occasional verses as I may happen to evacuate. The *Anthology* is revivescent under the eye of Blind Tobin, to whom all the honour, and glory, and papers are transferred. There will be enough of the old leaven to keep up a family likeness to its half-brothers. *Madoc* is on the anvil—slow and sure. I expect my Porto papers this evening with my mother, and shall return with new appetite to my dear old folios. So give Burnett a line. Your letter was too hard, and you would do a kind action by easing him of resentment. Edith's remembrances. Farewell.—Yours truly, R. SOUTHEY.

21. To C. W. W. Wynn

Saturday, Jan. 9, 1802.

My dear Wynn,—You will not be surprised to learn that I have lost my mother. Early on Tuesday morning there came on that difficulty of breathing which betokened death: till then all had been easy; for the most part she had slept, and, when waking, underwent no pain but that wretched sense of utter weakness; but then there was the struggle and sound in the throat, and the deadly appearance of the eyes, that had lost all their tranquillity. She asked for laudanum; I dropped some, but with so unsteady a hand, that I knew not how much; she saw the colour of the water, and cried, with a stronger voice than I had heard during her illness, 'That's nothing, Robert! thirty drops—six-and-thirty!'

It relieved her. She would not suffer me to remain by her bedside; that fearful kindness towards me had, throughout, distinguished her. 'Go down, my dear; I shall sleep presently!' She knew, and I knew, what that sleep would be. However, I bless God the last minutes were as easy as death can be; she breathed without effort,—breath after breath weaker, till all was over. I was not then in the room; but, going up to bring down Edith, I could not but look at her to see if she was indeed gone; it was against my wish and will, but I did look.

We had been suffering for twelve hours, and the moment of her release was welcome: like one whose limb has just been amputated, he feels the immediate ceasing of acute suffering;—the pain of the wound soon begins, and the sense of the loss continues through life. I calmed and curbed myself, and forced myself to employment; but, at night, there was no sound of feet in her bedroom, to which I had been used to listen, and in the morning it was not my first business to see her. I had used to carry her her food, for I could persuade her better than any one else to the effort of swallowing it.

Thank God, it is all over! Elmsley called on me and offered me money if I needed it; it was a kindness that I shall remember. Corry had paid me a second quarter, however.

'I have now lost all the friends of my infancy and childhood. The whole recollections of my first ten years are connected with the dead. There lives no one who can share them with me. It is losing so much of one's existence. I have not been yielding to, or rather indulging, grief; that would have been folly. I have read, written, talked; Bedford has been often with me, and kindly.

When I saw her after death, Wynn, the whole appearance was so much that of utter death, that the first feeling was as if there could have been no world for the dead; the feeling was very strong, and it required thought and reasoning to recover my former certainty, that as surely we must live hereafter, as all here is not the creation of folly or of chance.—God bless you! Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.'

22. To S. T. COLERIDGE

Bristol, Aug. 4, 1802.

In reply to your letter there are so many things to be said that I know not where to begin. First and foremost, then, about Keswick, and the pros and cons for domesticating there. To live cheap,—to save the crushing expense of furnishing a house;—sound, good, mercantile motives! Then come the ghosts of old Skiddaw and Great Robinson;—the whole eye-wantonness of lakes and mountains,—and a host of other feelings, which eight years have modified and moulded, but which have rooted like oaks, the stronger for their shaking. But then your horrid latitude! and incessant rains! and I myself one of your green-house plants, pining for want of sun. For Edith, her mind's eyes are squinting about it; she wants to go,

and she is afraid for my health. Some time hence I must return to Portugal, to complete and correct my materials and outlines: whenever that may be, there will be a hindrance and a loss in disposing of furniture, supposing I had it. Now, I am supposing that this I should find at Keswick, and this preponderance would fall like a ton weight in the scale.

As to your Essays, &c. &c., you spawn plans like a herring; I only wish as many of the seed were to vivify in proportion. Your Essays on Contemporaries I am not much afraid of the imprudence of, because I have no expectation that they will ever be written; but if you were to write, the scheme projected upon the old poets would be a better scheme, because more certain of sale, and in the execution nothing invidious. Besides, your sentence would fall with greater weight upon the dead: however impartial you may be, those who do *not* read your books will think your opinion the result of your personal attachments, and that very belief will prevent numbers from reading it. Again, there are some of these living poets to whom you could not fail of giving serious pain; Hayley, in particular,—and everything about that man is good except his poetry. Bloomfield I saw in London, and an interesting man he is—even more than you would expect. I have reviewed his Poems with the express object of serving him; because, if his fame keeps up to another volume, he will have made money enough to support him comfortably in the country: but in a work of criticism how could you bring him to the touchstone? and to lessen his reputation is to mar his fortune.

We shall probably agree altogether some day upon Wordsworth's *Lyrical Poems*. Does he not associate more feeling with particular phrases, and you also with him, than those phrases can convey to any one else? This I suspect. Who would part with a ring of a dead friend's hair? and yet a jeweller will give for it only the value of the gold: and so must words pass for their current value.

I saw a number of notorious people after you left

London. Mrs. Inchbald,—an odd woman, but I like her. Campbell, who spoke of old Scotch ballads with contempt! Fuseli, Flaxman, whose touch is better than his feeling. Bowles, Walter Whiter, who wanted to convert me to believe in Rowley. Perkins, the Tractorist,[1] a demure-looking rogue. Dr. Busby,—oh! what a Dr. Busby!—the great musician! the greater than Handel! who is to be the husband of St. Cecilia in his seraph state, and he set at me with a dead compliment! Lastly, Barry, the painter: poor fellow! he is too mad and too miserable to laugh at.

'Heber sent certain volumes of Thomas Aquinas to your London lodgings, where peradventure they still remain. I have one volume of the old Jockey, containing quaint things about angels; and one of Scotus Erigena; but if there be any pearls in those dunghills, you must be the cock to scratch them out,—that is not my dunghill. What think you of thirteen folios of Franciscan history? I am grown a great Jesuitophilist, and begin to think that they were the most enlightened personages that ever condescended to look after this 'little snug farm of the earth'. Loyola himself was a mere friar, but the missionaries were made of admirable stuff. There are some important questions arising out of this subject. The Jesuits have not only succeeded in preaching Christianity where our Methodists, &c., fail, but where all the other orders of their own church have failed also; they had the same success everywhere, in Japan as in Brazil. My love to Sara, if so it must be; however, as it is the casting out of a Spiritus Asper—which is an evil spirit—for the omen's sake, Amen! Tell me some more, as Moses says, about Keswick, for I am in a humour to be persuaded,—and if I may keep a jackass there for Edith! I have a wolfskin great-coat, so hot, that it is impossible to wear it here. Now, is not that a reason for going where it may be useful?—Vale.

R. S.

[1] This alludes to Perkins's magnetic Tractors.

23. To William Taylor

Bristol, February 14, 1803.

My dear Friend,—I was thinking over the *Iris* and whether or no I was not bound in conscience to the effort of a letter upon the subject, when yours arrived and turned the scale,—the matter so pleased me, and the manner so offended me. There, the murder is out, and now I will say what for a long while I have thought,—that you have ruined your style by Germanisms, Latinisms, and Graecisms, that you are sick of a surfeit of knowledge, that your learning breaks out like scabs and blotches upon a beautiful face. I am led by indolence and by good nature always rather to feel dislike than to express it; and if another finds the same faults that have displeased me in your writings, I have always defended them more zealously than if they had been my own: but faults they are,—faults anywhere, and tenfold aggravated in a newspaper. How are plain Norfolk farmers—and such will read the *Iris*—to understand words which they never heard before, and which are so foreign as not to be even in Johnson's farrago of a dictionary? I have read Cowper's *Odyssey* and *Trissino*, to cure my poetry of its wheyishness; let me prescribe the *Vulgar Errors* of Sir Thomas Browne to you for a like remedy. You taught me to write English by what you said of Burger's language and by what I felt from your translations,—one of the eras in my intellectual history; would that I could now in my turn impress you with the same conviction! Crowd your ideas as you will, your images can never be too many; give them the stamp and autograph of William Taylor, but let us have them in English—plain, perspicuous English—such as mere English readers can understand. Ours is a noble language, a beautiful language. I can tolerate a Germanism for family sake; but he who uses a Latin or a French phrase where a pure old English word

does as well, ought to be hung, drawn, and quartered for high treason against his mother-tongue.

Had I been at Norwich, I would have besought you not to undertake an office so inadequate and so unsuited to your powers. You are incurring all the disadvantages of that public authorship which till now you had wisely avoided. Everybody knows that William Taylor edits the *Iris*; even here I have heard it: but is William Taylor to learn that detraction is the resource and the consolation of inferiority? that every one of his acquaintance who feel themselves inferior, will gladly flatter themselves by dwelling upon and magnifying every error or semblance of an error that he may commit? The world always expect more than they can find, and to this evil you are peculiarly subject, because you have hitherto kept yourself back. I doubt whether precipitancy be so dangerous as such withholding. What ought not to be expected from him who kept the *Lenore* so many years unpublished? But you are in so far, that good luck be with you! is the best thing I can now say.

The metaphysical work talked of as the Orion progeny of Wedgewood, Mackintosh, and Coleridge was only talked of; nor was Coleridge to have done anything more than preface the work with a sketch of the history of metaphysics. He does project a work upon that subject, of which the first part—if he ever have health and stability enough to produce anything,—will be the death-blow of Hobbes, Locke, and Hume, for the two latter of whom in particular he feels the most righteous contempt. I am grieved that you never met Coleridge; all other men whom I have ever known are mere children to him, and yet all is palsied by a total want of moral strength. He will leave nothing behind him to justify the opinion of his friends to the world; yet many of his scattered poems are such, that a man of feeling will see that the author was capable of executing the greatest works.

The sonnets you speak of are not mine: nothing of mine has yet appeared in the *Post* except the ballad

of Bishop Athendius. You will always distinguish me by the subject, and by the omission of common faults, rather than the appearance of peculiar merit. In April I have some prospect of visiting London, for the purpose of getting at certain books in the Museum: if I get so far on the way, my conscience and inclination will lead me on to pass a week with you at Norwich. We are still houseless: indeed it is not an easy thing to find a house in the country without land, and near enough a town to be within convenient reach of its market. We will yet go to Keswick, if it be possible. I begin to hunger and thirst after Borrodale and Derwentwater. You undervalue lakes and mountains; they make me happier and wiser and better, and enable me to think and feel with a quicker and healthier intellect. Cities are as poisonous to genius and virtue in their best sense, as to the flower of the valley or the oak of the forest. Men of talent may and will be gregarious, men of genius will not; handicraft-men work together, but discoveries must be the work of individuals. Neither are men to be studied in cities, except indeed, as students walk the hospitals, you go to see all the modifications of disease. Rickman is not gone to Paris, nor going; he will be my host in London. Your paper upon Berkeley I shall look for. Burnett is still dreaming of what he will do; how he will show himself and outdo all the authors of the day, which he says is no difficult matter. Lord Stanhope, he says, will take care of him; I wish it may be so. God bless you!—Yours affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

24. To JOHN MAY

Bristol, 1803.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—If I am not greatly deceived, the Scotch Review may be answered satisfactorily wherever it forms a specific objection. It is stated as an inconsistency that Thalaba should be saved when his family was destroyed, because the stars appointed that hour for his danger. Okba began at the wrong end. He

knew not which was the destroyer, and the moment of danger past. It must be remembered that the most absolute fatalism is the mainspring of Mohammed's religion, and therefore the principle is always referred to in the poem. The same objection is made to the declaration of Azrael, that one must die, Laila or Thalaba: if you remember the dogma, that also is clear. Allah, like Pope's deity,

> Binding nature fast in fate,
> Left free the human will.

The simoon kills Abdaldar in spite of the ring. Is providential interposition inconsistent with my story?

> Sint licet expertes vitae sensusque capessunt,
> Jussa tamen superum venti.

The Destroyer's arrow cannot kill Lobaba, but does kill Aloadin's bird. Whoever has read the Arabian Tales must know that the talisman gives magical powers. Any human hand may destroy a talisman—it is brittle and destructible. Lobaba is '*knocked down* by a shower of sand of his own rising!' My dear friend, you have incautiously admitted ridicule as the test of truth; for the whole force of this review consists only in the apt use of ridicule. Could you or can you perceive anything of the absurdity implied in this particular instance, when you read that,

> Driven by the breath of God,
> A column of the desert met his way?

'Thalaba is enabled to read the unintelligible letters on the ring by the help of some other unintelligible letters on a locust.' Look at the poem and you will see that this is falsely stated. The reviewer does not understand how Thalaba knows he has been commissioned to destroy his father's murderers; he had only looked over the poem to find faults which he might abuse. Had he read it with honest attention, this objection could not have been invented. The spirit in the tent told him, 'We knew from the race of

Hodeirah the destined destroyer should come.' What other of that race was left ?

I was more pleased than praise usually can please me, when you told me that you liked *Thalaba*, because it is of approbation like yours that I am most desirous. Do not misunderstand this as a flattering compliment. It was not as a critical reader to whose critical opinion I could defer that I looked for your approbation, but as a man who would read with no nine-and-thirty Articles to fetter his free judgement, and who, if the poem itself pleased him, would say so without caring whether it was written after the laws of Aristotle. If the book were the patchwork piece of absurdity that this reviewer represents it, could it possibly have pleased you ? If gross misrepresentation be detected in any part of the review, may you not fairly suspect unfair disposition in the writer's mind ? Some instances of such misrepresentation I have already pointed out; there remains enough other such. Because I have imitated one passage (and that a most beautiful one) from Bishop Taylor, he says the poem is made up of scraps of old sermons ! Because, with a very wise feeling of pride as well as honesty, I gave in my notes all the hints and traditions of which I had availed myself, he says I have versified the common-place book, and allows me no invention, never noticing what of the story is wholly original, nor that the structure of the whole is so.

Now I will avow myself confident enough to ask you if you know any other poem of equal originality except the *Fairy Queen*, which I regard almost with a religious love and veneration ?

With regard to that part of the review which relates to Wordsworth, it has obviously no relation whatever to *Thalaba*, nor can there be a stronger proof of want of discernment, or want of candour, than in grouping together three men so different in style as Wordsworth, Coleridge, and myself, under one head. The fault of Coleridge has been a too-swelling diction ; you who know his poems know whether they ought to be abused

for mean language. Of *Thalaba*, the language rises and falls with the subject, and is always in a high key, I wish you would read the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth; some of them are very faulty; but, indeed, I would risk my whole future fame on the assertion that they will one day be regarded as the finest poems in our language. I refer you particularly to 'The Brothers', a poem on 'Tintern Abbey', and 'Michael'. Now, with Wordsworth I have no intimacy; scarcely any acquaintance. In whatever we resemble each other, the resemblance has sprung, not, I believe, from chance, but because we have both studied poetry—and indeed it is no light or easy study—in the same school,—in the works of nature, and in the heart of man.

My dear friend, I have a full and well-founded faith in the hope you express, that my reputation will indeed stand high hereafter. Already I have enough, but it will be better *discriminated* hereafter. Upon *Madoc* I am exercising severe revision. You will see *Thalaba* corrected whenever it be reprinted. My time is unhappily frittered away in little money-getting employments of silent and obscure exertion. 'Haud facile emergunt quorum virtutibus,' &c.[1] Howbeit, I am contented;—that is too poor a word—I am pleased and satisfied with my lot. In a profession I might have made a fortune. I shall yet make what will be a fortune to me, and that in a way obedient to the call and impulse of my own nature, and best adapted to develop every moral and intellectual germ implanted in me. How I must by many be regarded as an improvident man, squandering talents that might have made him opulent and raised him to a high rank! Upon their views I confess the charge; but it is a virtue for which I already receive the reward of my own applause, and shall receive the highest rewards as the feelings and truths which I shall enforce produce their effect age after age, so long as our language and our literature endure.

[1] Juv., *Sat.* iii. 164.

I have had an unpleasant affair with my publishers. I engaged to make a version of *Amadis of Gaul* anonymously, for which I have £60; £40 more on the sale of the edition, and £30 on the sale of a second edition. They, very incautiously, though certainly with no mean motive, mentioned my name, and it got into the newspaper. I have been, therefore, obliged to make a new agreement,—to avow the work, receive £100 instead of the £60; £50 when the edition is sold, and half the profit of all after editions. God bless you, my dear friend. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

PS. Robert Lovell has no claim to the freedom of London; his father was a Quaker of Bristol. Coleridge is with me, and I believe going abroad for his health, which suffers dreadfully from this climate.

25. To C. W. W. WYNN

June 9, 1803.

I have just gone through the Scottish Border Ballads. Walter Scott himself is a man of great talent and genius; but wherever he patches an old poem, it is always with new bricks. Of the modern ballads, his own fragment is the only good one, and that is very good. I am sorry to see Leyden's good for so little. *Sir Agrethorn* is flat, foolish, Matthewish, Gregoryish, Lewisish. I have been obliged to coin vituperative adjectives on purpose, the language not having terms enough of adequate abuse. I suppose the word Flodden-Field entitles it to a place here, but the scene might as well have been laid in El-dorado, or Tothill Fields, or the country of Prester John, for anything like costume which it possesses. It is odd enough that almost every passage which Scott has quoted from Froissart should be among the extracts which I had made.

In all these modern ballads there is a modernism of thought and language-turns, to me very perceptible and very unpleasant, the more so for its mixture with

antique words—polished steel and rusty iron! This is the case in all Scott's ballads. His *Eve of St. John's* is a better ballad in story than any of mine, but it has this fault. Elmsley once asked me to versify that on the Glenfinlas—to try the difference of style; but I declined it, as waste labour and an invidious task. Matthew G. Lewis, Esq., M.P., sins more grievously in this way; he is not enough versed in old English to avoid it: Scott and Leyden are, and ought to have written more purely. I think if you will look at *Q. Orraca* you will perceive that, without being a canto from our old ballads, it has quite the ballad character of language.

Scott, it seems, adopts the same system of metre with me, and varies his tune in the same stanza from iambic to anapaestic *ad libitum*. In spite of all the trouble that has been taken to torture Chaucer into heroic metre, I have no doubt whatever that he wrote upon this system, common to all the ballad writers. Coleridge agrees with me upon this. The proof is, that, read him thus, and he becomes everywhere harmonious; but expletive syllables, en's and y's and e's, only make him halt upon ten lame toes. I am now daily drinking at that pure well of English undefiled, to get historical manners, and to learn English and poetry.

His volume of the Border Songs is more amusing for its prefaces and notes than its poetry: the ballads themselves were written in a very unfavourable age and country; the costume less picturesque than chivalry, the manners more barbarous. I shall be very glad to see the 'Sir Tristram' which Scott is editing: the old Cornish knight has been one of my favourite heroes for fifteen years. Those Romances that Ritson published are fine studies for a poet. This I am afraid will have more Scotch in it than will be pleasant; I never read Scotch poetry without rejoicing that we have not Welsh-English into the bargain, and a written brogue.

Rickman tells me there will be no army sent to Portugal; that it is understood the French may overrun

it at pleasure, and that then we lay open Brazil and Spanish America. If, indeed, the Prince of Brazil could be persuaded to go over there, and fix the seat of his government in a colony fifty times as large, and five hundred fold more valuable, than the mother country, England would have a trade opened to it far more than equivalent to the loss of the Portuguese and Spanish ports. But if he remains under the protection of France, and is compelled to take a part against England, any expedition to Brazil must be for mere plunder. Conquest is quite impossible.

Most likely I shall go up to town in about a week or ten days. God bless you! R. S.

26. To William Taylor

Bristol, June 23, 1803.

Dear William Taylor,—Your theology does nothing but mischief; it serves only to thin the miserable ranks of Unitarianism. The regular troops of infidelity do little harm; and their trumpeters, such as Voltaire and Paine, not much more. But it is such pioneers as Middleton and you, and your German friends, that work underground and sap the very citadel. That Monthly Magazine is read by all the Dissenters,—I call it the Dissenter's Obituary,—and here are you eternally mining, mining, under the shallow faith of their half-learned, half-witted, half-paid, half-starved pastors. We must not give strong meats to weak stomachs. I have qualms of conscience about it myself. There is poor Burnett gone stark foolish, because he has been made the friend of the wise,—diseased at once with a plethora of vanity and an inanition of knowledge; with all the disposition to destroy himself, only that he cannot muster up courage, and that I suppose he will do at last, in the hope of being talked of as an instance of neglected genius. Oh, that proverb about the pearls and the swine has a great deal more in it than I once imagined! I, who am a believer, were I now at three-and-twenty, with the opinions that I

hold at nine-and-twenty, would choose the church for my profession; but then I have a deep and silent and poet-feeling connected with these things, which has grown with me and will grow.

It is you then who have delayed the *Annual Review*? My threshing was finished two months ago. I go to London on Sunday next, and will ask Hamilton for that account of ——, which he has used me somewhat uncivilly in not inserting. His application to you twelve months after I had mentioned you to him, and almost six months after he applied to me for your direction, is very much in character. If he has not lost the article, I will turn it over to A. Aikin. It cannot want abridgement; he requested long articles from me, because he was short of matter.

Why refashion 'Drayton'? In the first place, you could write a better poem than the old Michael; in the next place, instead of making the poets of Elizabeth's day talk as they do now, you would do better to make the poets under his most gracious majesty George III talk as they did in Elizabeth's day. It is an article in my creed, that from the days of John Milton English poetry has gone on from bad to worse. We have had froth and flummery imposed upon us,—contortions of language that passed for poetry because they were not prose, and phrases that have been admired by faith, never being designed to be understood. Coleridge and I have often talked of making a great work upon English literature; but Coleridge only talks, and, poor fellow! he will not do that long, I fear; and then I shall begin in my turn to feel an old man,—to talk of the age of little men, and complain like Ossian. It provokes me when I hear a set of puppies yelping at him; upon whom he, a great, good-natured mastiff, if he came up to them, would just lift up his leg and pass on. It vexes and grieves me to the heart, that when he is gone, as go he will, nobody will believe what a mind goes with him,—how infinitely and ten thousand-thousand-fold the mightiest of his generation.

My stay in London will be short; I do not mean to be absent from home above a fortnight, and already wish that time was past. If transmigration be the true faith, and our aptitudes determine our destiny, if I be not exalted into my own old owl-eyed Simorgh, I shall certainly make my appearance in the next post-diluvian world in the shape of a toad in a stone. My little girl is so fond of me, that I am in a fair way of spoiling her, and, young as she is, I am sometimes showing her the pictures when I ought to be reading the book. However, I get on. You will like my history, and you will like my *Madoc*; and if you were to review them, why, I should be half an edition the richer man. My poor books make their own fortune, but not mine; they get me reputation, and I want money. Oh, if I could find some kind gentleman who has an ambition to be a poet, and would pay me well for writing him up above all the Darwins, &c., of the day!

Among the odd revolutions of the world you may reckon this, that my politics come nearer Mr. Windham's than they do William Taylor's.—God bless you!

R. S.

27. S. T. Coleridge to R. Southey

Keswick, July, 1803.

My dear Southey,—I write now to propose a scheme, or rather a rude outline of a scheme, of your grand work. What harm can a proposal do? If it be no pain to you to reject it, it will be none to me to have it rejected. I would have the work entitled *Bibliotheca Britannica*, or an History of British Literature, bibliographical, biographical, and critical. The two *last* volumes I would have to be a chronological catalogue of all noticeable or extant books; the others, be the number six or eight, to consist entirely of separate treatises, each giving a critical biblio-biographical history of some one subject. I will, with great pleasure, join you in learning Welsh and Erse: and you, I,

Turner, and Owen, might dedicate ourselves for the first half year to a complete history of all Welsh, Saxon, and Erse books that are not translations, that are the native growth of Britain. If the Spanish neutrality continues, I will go in October or November to Biscay, and throw light on the Basque.

Let the next volume contain the history of *English* poetry and poets, in which I would include all prose truly poetical. The first half of the second volume should be dedicated to great single names, Chaucer and Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton and Taylor, Dryden and Pope; the poetry of witty logic,—Swift, Fielding, Richardson, Sterne: I write *par hazard*, but I mean to say all great names as have either formed epochs in our taste, or such, at least, as are representative; and the great object to be in each instance to determine, first, the true merits and demerits of the *books*; secondly, what of these belong to the age—what to the author *quasi peculium*. The second half of the second volume should be a history of poetry and romances, everywhere interspersed with biography, but more flowing, more consecutive, more bibliographical, chronological, and complete. The third volume I would have dedicated to English prose, considered as to style, as to eloquence, as to general impressiveness; a history of styles and manners, their causes, their birthplaces and parentage, their analysis.

These three volumes would be so generally interesting, so exceedingly entertaining, that you might bid fair for a sale of the work at large. Then let the fourth volume take up the history of metaphysics, theology, medicine, alchemy, common, canon, and Roman law, from Alfred to Henry VII; in other words, a history of the dark ages in Great Britain. The fifth volume—carry on metaphysics and ethics to the present day in the first half; the second half, comprise the theology of all the reformers. In the fourth volume there would be a grand article on the philosophy of the theology of the Roman Catholic religion. In this (fifth volume), under different names,—Hooker,

Baxter, Biddle, and Fox,—the spirit of the theology of all the other parts of Christianity. The sixth and seventh volumes must comprise all the articles you can get on all the separate arts and sciences that have been treated of in books since the Reformation; and, by this time, the book, if it answered at all, would have gained so high a reputation, that you need not fear having whom you liked to write the different articles—medicine, surgery, chemistry, &c, &c., navigation, travellers, voyagers, &c. &c., If I go into Scotland, shall I engage Walter Scott to write the history of Scottish poets? Tell me, however, what you think of the plan. It would have one prodigious advantage: whatever accident stopped the work, would only prevent the future good, not mar the past; each volume would be a great and valuable work *per se*. Then each volume would awaken a new interest, a new set of readers, who would buy the past volumes of course; then it would allow you ample time and opportunities for the slavery of the catalogue volumes, which should be at the same time an index to the work, which would be, in very truth, a pandect of knowledge, alive and swarming with human life, feeling, incident. By the by, what a strange abuse has been made of the word encyclopaedia! It signifies, properly, grammar, logic, rhetoric, and ethics and metaphysics, which last, explaining the ultimate principles of grammar—log., rhet., and eth.—formed a circle of knowledge. To call a huge unconnected miscellany of the *omne scibile*, in an arrangement determined by the accident of initial letters, an encyclopaedia, is the impudent ignorance of your Presbyterian bookmakers. Good night!—God bless you! S. T. C.

28. To S. T. Coleridge

Bristol, Aug. 3. 1803.

Dear Coleridge,—I meant to have written sooner; but those little units of interruption and preventions, which sum up to as ugly an aggregate as the items in

a lawyer's bill, have come in the way. Your plan is too good, too gigantic, quite beyond my powers. If you had my tolerable state of health, and that love of steady and productive employment which is now grown into a necessary habit with me, if you were to execute and would execute it, it would be, beyond all doubt, the most valuable work of any age or any country; but I cannot fill up such an outline. No man can better feel where he fails than I do; and to rely upon you for whole quartos! Dear Coleridge, the smile that comes with that thought is a very melancholy one; and if Edith saw me now, she would think my eyes were weak again, when, in truth, the humour that covers them springs from another cause.

For my own comfort, and credit, and peace of mind, I must have a plan which I know myself strong enough to execute. I can take author by author as they come in their series, and give his life and an account of his works quite as well as ever it has yet been done. I can write connecting paragraphs and chapters shortly and pertinently, in my way; and in this way the labour of all my associates can be more easily arranged. And, after all, this is really nearer the actual design of what I purport by a bibliotheca than yours would be,—a book of reference, a work in which it may be seen what has been written upon every subject in the British language; this has elsewhere been done in the dictionary form; whatever we get better than that form—*ponemus lucro*.

The Welsh part, however, should be kept completely distinct, and form a volume, or half a volume, by itself; and this must be delayed till the last in publication, whatever it be in order, because it cannot be done till the whole of the Archaeology is printed, and by that time I will learn the language, and so, perhaps, will you. George Ellis is about it; I think that, with the help of Turner and Owen, and poor Williams, we could then do everything that ought to be done.

The first part, then, to be published is the Saxon; this Turner will execute, and to this you and William

Taylor may probably both be able to add something from your stores of northern knowledge. The Saxon books all come in sequence chronologically; then the mode of arrangement should be by centuries, and the writers classed as poets, historians, &c., by *centuries*, or by *reigns*, which is better. Upon this plan the Schoolmen will come in the first volume.

The historical part of the theology, and the bibliographical, I shall probably execute myself, and you will do the philosophy. By the by, I have lately found the book of John Perrott the Quaker, who went to convert the Pope, containing all his epistles to the Romans, &c., written in the Inquisition at Rome; for they allowed him the privilege of writing, most likely because his stark madness amused them. This fellow (who turned rogue at last, wore a sword, and persecuted the Quakers in America to make them swear) made a schism in the society against George Fox, insisting that hats should be kept on in meeting during speaking, (has not this prevailed ?) and that the Friends should not shave. His book is the most frantic I ever saw, quite Gilbertish; and the man acted up to it.—God bless you! R. S.

29. To John May

Bristol, Aug. 19, 1803.

My dear Friend,—We are in heavy affliction: my poor child is dying of hydrocephalus, and we have only to pray to God speedily to remove her. She is quite insensible, and that is our main consolation. Edith is suffering bitterly. I myself am recovering, perfectly resigned to the visitation, perfectly satisfied that it is for the best, perfectly assured that the loss will be but for a time.

Never man enjoyed purer happiness than I have for the last twelve months. My plans are now all wrecked. Your letter was matter of some little relief to me. Longman's fears wish to delay the *Bibliotheca*, and I am rejoiced to have no fetter upon me at present. As

soon as it shall please God to remove this little object, I shall, with all speed, set off for Cumberland. Edith will be nowhere so well as with her sister Coleridge. She has a little girl, some six months old, and I shall try and graft her into the wound, while it is yet fresh.—God bless you, my dear friend. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

30. To MISS BARKER

Keswick, Sept. 8, 1803.

Send me your ink receipt, and without loss of time, for look what a vile mulatto composition is here, and all kickman-jiggery of manuscripts must be at a stand till I get something better. This, being of the first importance, comes first. In the same letter, tell me when you will set forward for these lakes and mountains. God bless them! I look with something like awe and envy at their unchangeableness. It is but two years since I left them, and I would give two *ears* to wake and find it all but a dream, and that I was as in September 1801; but one's dreams are not at our own disposal. By day, I am the great autocrat of my own thoughts and feelings, and could, I am sure, utter jokes and quidditics upon the rack; but by night, the poor brain gets loose. I and the Blue Devils battle, like the Persian gods, with alternate victory in light and darkness. By day I beat him; but the cowardly Indigo Beelzebub gets at me when I am asleep; and it is but poor consolation to abuse him thus in the morning, after a night's suffering.

Edith cannot sleep, and till she *overgets* this, she cannot be better; opiates take no good effect upon her. She bore the journey well, and we arrived safe and sound yesterday, the third evening.

We took such excellent care of our baggage, that we have great reason to be GLAD,—
Having lost nothing but my old great coat, and a bundle of dirty linen in its pockets, and Edith's new green PLAID!

So I made this poem, and then, you know, could laugh by way of consolation!

I have to thank you for all the kind attentions we received at Congreve. Edith was certainly the better for being there. She is at first somewhat more dispirited here, as I expected; indeed, the sight of the little Sara, and her infantine sounds, produce in me more shootings of recollection than are good. Coleridge had taught me to expect something beautiful in her: she is a fine child, but, like other fine children, my poor Margaret was the little wonder of every one who beheld her. Sometimes I feel as if it were fit that she should grow up an angel. Few men have had more of these weanings of the heart from earth than have been dealt to me. All who were about my infancy are gone; I have no friends left but those of my own making. All the faces that I first learnt to love have been taken away, and all prematurely. As far as survivorship gives the feeling, I am old already; but this has been the heaviest blow, and has gone the deepest.

Come! If I twisted language into every possible form of invitation it could not mean more. I shall hardly have enough power over myself to quit the fireside till you go with me into the fells and valleys. Tell me that you will come, and I will write full directions where to stop, &c. You must see this country once, and when could you see it so well? I have no fixture-feeling about me, no symptoms of root-striking here. Alas! what am I but a feather driven by the wind! God knows where the wind may drive me next. When I so far forget ten years' experience as to form a plan or unduly a hope, my heart goes to Portugal. This is a wonderful country here; it does everything to the mind except gladden it: but there is a life and joy-giving power in the very air of Portugal,—even to breathe was a pleasure there. I would give one eye to blind Fortune if she would let me look on the Tagus with the other. N.B. She should have the sore one, though. Farewell. R. S.

PS. Edith left her silver knife at Congreve. Remember us all thankfully to your sister. I am indebted, also, to Mr. Lewis.

Our direction is 'Keswick, Cumberland'. Coleridge likes to have 'Greta Hall' prefixed.

31. To Charles Danvers

Keswick, Oct. 1803.

Dear Danvers,—Since my last I have taken very vigorous exercise, and am the better for it. One morning round the Lake, a ten or twelve miles' walk,—only disagreeable as being solitary. Yesterday with Coleridge to the top of Skiddaw, the work of four and a half hours, that is, there and back; but the descent is mere play. Up hill a man's wind would fail him, though his lungs were as capacious as a church-organ, and the legs would ache though the calves were full-grown bulls. The panorama from the summit is very grand,—not indeed equal to what I have seen from Monchique, neither in height nor in its whole beauty, but in some certain features certainly of unequalled interest,—the Lakes Keswick and Bassenthwaite lying below us, and seeming each to fill its vale; for the shores are merged in the mountains, and quite lost as you look down, whereas the water, lying all in light, is seen in its full extent. The summit is covered with loose stones split by the frosts, and thus gradually are they reduced to a very rich soil, and washed down to the glens, so that, like old women, Skiddaw must grow shorter. For some little distance below, nothing but moss grows—for it is bitter bleak there, next-door to heaven. To-day I have been tracking the river Greta, which, instead of *Great A*, ought to have been called *Great S*; but its name hath a good and most apt meaning, 'The loud Lamenter.' It is a lovely stream. I have often forded such among the mountains of Algarve, and lingered to look at them with a wistful eye,—if I may so express myself, with a feeling that it was the only time I was ever to behold the scene before

me, so beautiful! That feeling has often risen in me when gazing upon the permanent things of nature which I am beholding but for a time. God knows I often looked upon my poor child with the same melancholy, as though to impress more deeply in remembrance a face whose beauties were certainly to change, and perhaps to pass away. How glad shall I be to show you these things, and to make you confess that if he who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb should brace me up to the climate, this is the best place for my sojourn! We had, indeed, a gloomy and comfortless parting. Your comforts had been more deeply rooted up than mine; and yet the axe cut deep at mine. Edith continues as you would expect—silently and deeply affected. I have not yet been able to get her out of the house, though our weather has been uncommonly fine; and without exercise the tonics which she takes under Doctor Southey (!) will be of little avail. Last night, indeed, we went to see a set of strollers play *She stoops to conquer*. Nothing could be worse,—and that, you know, was the merit we desired. But it made me melancholy to see such a set of wretches collected together,—one of them an old man, I am sure little short of fourscore, lean and lantern-jawed, and so ripe for the grave, that his face was as striking a *memento mori* as ever glared in gold letters under the skull and thigh bones of a tombstone.

Moses [1] grows up as miraculous a boy as ever King Pharaoh's daughter found his namesake to be. I am perfectly astonished at him; and his father has the same sentiment of wonder and the same forefeeling that it is a prodigious and an unnatural intellect,—and that he will not live to be a man. There is more, Danvers, in the old woman's saying, 'he is too clever to live,' than appears to a common observer. Diseases which ultimately destroy, in their early stages quicken and kindle the intellect like opium. It seems as if death looked out the most promising plants in this great nursery, to plant them in a better soil. The boy's

[1] Hartley Coleridge.

great delight is to get his father to talk metaphysics to him,—few *men* understand him so perfectly;—and then his own incidental sayings are quite wonderful. 'The pity is,'—said he one day to his father, who was expressing some wonder that he was not so pleased as he expected with riding in a wheelbarrow,—'the pity is that *I'se* always thinking of my thoughts.' The child's imagination is equally surprising; he invents the wildest tales you ever heard, a history of the Kings of England, who are to be. 'How do you know that this is to come to pass, Hartley?' 'Why you know it must be something, or it would not be in my head;' and so, because it had not been, did Moses conclude it must be, and away he prophesies of his King Thomas the Third. Then he has a tale of a monstrous beast called the Rabzeze Kallaton, whose skeleton is on the outside of his flesh; and he goes on with the oddest and most original inventions, till he sometimes actually terrifies himself, and says, '*I'se* afraid of my own thoughts.' It may seem like superstition, but I have a feeling that such an intellect can never reach maturity. The springs are of too exquisite workmanship to last long. God bless you. I miss you, and King, and Cupid, and my books, and sometimes James the bookseller. Would to God that was all that I missed! but that God's will is best has been at all times present to my heart and reason.

R. S.

32. To Lieut. Southey, H.M.S. 'Galatea'

Keswick, Oct. 29, 1803.

Dear Tom,—Your letter did not reach me till yesterday, eight days after its date, so that, though this be the earliest reply, perhaps it may not arrive at Cork till after your departure. This place is better suited for me than you imagine—it tempts me to take far more exercise that I ever took elsewhere, for we have the loveliest scenes possible close at hand; and I have, therefore, seldom or never felt myself in stronger health. And as for good spirits, be sure I have the

outward and visible sign, however it may be for the inward and spiritual grace.

My reviewing, more than ordinarily procrastinated, stands still. I began Clarke's book, and having vented my gall there, laid the others all by till the first of November, that I might be free till then for work more agreeable. My main work has been *Madoc*. I am now arrived at the old fifth book, and at the twelfth of the booklings into which it is now divided. I mean to call them neither books, cantos, nor any thing else, but simply 1, 2, 3, &c., entitling each part from its peculiar action: thus, 1. The Return; 2. Cadwallon; 3. The Voyage; 4. Lincoya; 5. The War; 6. The Battle; 7. The Peace; 8. Emma; 9. Mathraval; 10. The Gorsedd, i. e. the Meeting of the Bards; 11. Dinevawr; 12. Bards,—and so on. The eleven divisions finished, which bring it down to the end of the old fourth book, contain 2,536 lines,—an increase on the whole of 731; but of the whole not one line in five stands as originally written. About 9,000 lines will be the extent; but the farther I proceed the less alteration will be needed. When I turn the half-way, I shall then say to my friends, 'Now, get me subscribers, and I will publish *Madoc*.' In what is done there is some of my best workmanship. I shall get by it less money than fame, and less fame than envy, but the envy will be only life-long; and when that is gone and the money spent—you know the old rhyme.

It seems we are to have war with poor Portugal. If this be the case, my uncle must of course settle in England. This would be very pleasant to me, were it not so deeply and rootedly my own desire to settle in Portugal; but, *adonde não he remedio, então paciencia*, as I learnt from the Portuguese. This war has affected me in every possible shape; in the *King George* packet I lost a whole cargo of books, for which I had been a year and a half waiting, and my uncle searching.

I must go to work for money; and that also frets me. This hand-to-mouth work is very disheartening, and

interferes cruelly with better things,—more important they cannot be called, for the bread-and-cheese is the business of the first necessity. But from my *History* I do expect permanent profit, and such a perpetual interest as shall relieve me. I shall write the volume of letters which you have heard me talk of—an omnium-gatherum of the odd things I have seen in England.

Whenever you are at a decent distance, and can get leave of absence, do come. Get to Liverpool by water, or, still better, to Whitehaven. You will be thoroughly delighted with the country. The mountains, on Thursday evening, before the sun was quite down, or the moon bright, were all of one dead-blue colour; their rifts, and rocks, and swells, and scars had all disappeared—the surface was perfectly uniform, nothing but the outline distinct; and this even surface of dead blue, from its unnatural uniformity, made them, though not transparent, appear transvious,—as though they were of some soft or cloudy texture through which you could have passed. I never saw any appearance so perfectly unreal. Sometimes a blazing sunset seems to steep them through and through with red light; or it is a cloudy morning, and the sunshine slants down through a rift in the clouds, and the pillar of light makes the spot whereon it falls so emerald green, that it looks like a little field of Paradise. At night you lose the mountains, and the wind so stirs up the lake that it looks like the sea by moonlight. Just behind the house rises a fine mountain, by name Latrigg; it joins Skiddaw; we walked up yesterday,—a winding path of three quarters of an hour, and then *rode down on our own burros*, in seven minutes. Jesu-Maria-Jozè! that was a noble ride! but I will have a saddle made for my burro next time. The path of our slide is still to be seen from the garden—so near is it. One of these days I will descend Skiddaw in the same manner, and so immortalize myself.

There is a carpenter here, James Lawson by name, who is become my Juniper [1] in the boardmaking way.

[1] A carpenter at Bristol.

He has made me a pair, of walnut the large size, and of a reddish wood from Demerara the small, and is about to get me some yew. This, as you may suppose, is a consolation to me, and it requires all Edith's powers of prudential admonition to dissuade me from having a little table with a drawer in it. His father [1] asked Derwent yesterday who made him? *D.*: James Lawson. *Father*: And what did he make you of? *D.*: The stuff he makes wood of. When Derwent had got on thus far in his system of Derwentogony, his imagination went on, and he added,—'he sawed me off, and I did not like it.'

We began to wonder uneasily that there was no news of you. Edith's love. God bless you! R. S.

33. To Miss Barker

Keswick, Feb. 1804.

Why do I write upon this paper? Better is half a loaf than no bread. The paper is good paper,—very substantial and good,—cost me seventeen shillings per ream. I could not get any letter paper here, and this, when folded in the true bachelorship form, will look very respectably at the post-office.

I like your 'Stork' well, and doubt not you will like my motto for it, which is 'Riddle-my-riddle-my-ree'. I can find no better, but I can do what is better; for the device being a true emblem, I can make a poem upon it, which, being put in one volume, will serve instead of a motto for all the rest; and I can put you in the poem; so send me the drawing, and I will write in the very spirit of old honest Wither: God rest his soul! He was a fine, sulky, stubborn, good-hearted, mutinous Puritan, and, though he was dull, his warm heart sometimes heated his imagination, and then he sang divinely. I wish you had seen as many storks as I have; it is the most picturesque of European birds in its habits, stalking in the marshes or flapping homeward at evening to the church-tower or the ruined

[1] Coleridge.

castle. The nest would cover the top of a pillar completely.

And now about the *Madoc* drawings. I will get the book with the Mexican costume down here by the time you make your appearance hand in hand with May, or with April-day, if you think that would be coupling you suitably. Summer is not the season for this country. Coleridge says, and says well, that then it is like a theatre at noon. There are *no goings on* under a clear sky; but at all other seasons there is such shifting of shades, such islands of light, such columns and buttresses of sunshine, as might almost make a painter burn his brushes, as the sorcerers did their books of magic when they saw the divinity which rested upon the apostles. The very snow, which you would perhaps think must monotonize the mountains, gives new varieties; it brings out their recesses and designates all their inequalities, it impresses a better feeling of their height, and it reflects such tints of saffron, or fawn, or rose-colour to the evening sun. *O Maria Santissima!* Mount Horeb with the glory upon its summit might have been more glorious but not more beautiful than old Skiddaw in his winter pelisse of ermine. I will not quarrel with frost, though the fellow has the impudence to take me by the nose. The lake-side has such ten thousand charms: a fleece of snow or of the hoar frost lies on the fallen trees or large stones; the grass-points, that just peer above the water, are powdered with diamonds; the ice on the margin with chains of crystal, and such veins and wavy lines of beauty as mock all art; and, to crown all, Coleridge and I have found out that stones thrown upon the lake, when frozen, made a noise like singing birds, and when you whirl on it a large flake of ice, away the shivers slide, chirping and warbling like a flight of finches.

But once more to the drawings. *Madoc* is not such a painter's poem as *Thalaba*, though you doubtless will find out more in it than I can. But it will be possible to make very learned drawings which will be

useful. Let me see what subjects seem practicable. The blind old man sitting on the smooth stone beside the brook, and feeling Madoc's face—that will surely do. The canoes rowing Madoc over the lake on a floating island. Coanocotzin showing Madoc where the dead Tepollomi stood up

> Against the wall, by devilish art preserved,
> And from his black and shrivelled hand,
> The steady lamp hung down.

I cannot find any other passage as yet that is picture-fit. The interest is more internal than in *Thalaba*. The intellect is more addressed than the eye; it has more to do with feeling than with fancy. However, I shall read it over with you, and then we will see with both our pairs of eyes at once. Senhora, I conceive two sets of eyes to see more clearly than one and a pair of spectacles.

If ever I write my Life, the family anecdotes will be exceedingly amusing—like the history of the plagues of Egypt to those who have no concern in them. I have made up a theory upon the process of family diseases, which will stand test, I think,—How all oddities are different appearances of some intellectual affection, some disease or disorganization of the brain; and that, if mine had not broken out in poetry, I should have been an evangelical in sad sober earnest, and perhaps have spouted prophecies in Moorfields.

Fare you well. You see I am in good spirits. In plain verity, I will not be cast down for what man can do. When God afflicts me, it is for wise purposes, and I bow, and suffer, and am the better. But whenever the folly or depravity of any person with whom it is my misfortune to be connected annoys me, I feel it is an insult, and permit resentment to prevail in me, as the best antidote to vexation. If you have never read *Epictetus*, get Miss Carter's translation, and become wiser and happier. Tuesday night. Farewell.

R. S.

34. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Greta Hall, Feb. 16, 1804.

Dear Grosvenor,—I have seen a sight more dreamy and wonderful than any scenery that fancy ever yet devised for Faeryland. We had walked down to the lake side; it was a delightful day, the sun shining, and a few white clouds hanging motionless in the sky. The opposite shore of Derwentwater consists of one long mountain, which suddenly terminates in an arch, thus ⌣, and through that opening you see a long valley between mountains, and bounded by mountain beyond mountain; to the right of the arch the heights are more varied and of greater elevation. Now, as there was not a breath of air stirring, the surface of the lake was so perfectly still, that it became one great mirror, and all its waters disappeared; the whole line of shore was represented as vividly and steadily as it existed in its actual being—the arch, the vale within, the single houses far within the vale, the smoke from their chimneys, the farthest hills, and the shadow and substance joined at their bases so indivisibly, that you could make no separation even in your judgement. As I stood on the shore, heaven and the clouds seemed lying under me; I was looking down into the sky, and the whole range of mountains, having one line of summits under my feet, and another above me, seemed to be suspended between the firmaments. Shut your eyes and dream of a scene so unnatural and so beautiful. What I have said is most strictly and scrupulously true; but it was one of those happy moments that can seldom occur, for the least breath stirring would have shaken the whole vision, and at once unrealized it. I have before seen a partial appearance, but never before did, and perhaps never again may, lose sight of the lake entirely; for it literally seemed like an abyss of sky before me, not fog and clouds from a mountain, but the blue heaven spotted with a few fleecy pillows of cloud, that looked placed there for angels to rest upon them.

I am treating with my bookseller to publish a supplementary or companion work to Ellis's *Specimens*, beginning where he leaves off, and coming down to the present time, exclusive of the living poets, so that my work, with his, should contain a brief notice of all the English poets, good, bad, and indifferent, with specimens of each, except the dramatic writers. If this take place, it will cost me a journey to London, and a month's hard work there; the main part can be done here. You know Ellis's book, of course, and, if you do not, Nicholl can show it you (who, by the by, will go to the devil for charging half-a-guinea a volume for it, unless he can send Ellis instead). Now, if I should make this work, of which there is little doubt, you may, if so disposed, give me an opportunity of acknowledging my obligations for assistance to my friend Mr. G. C. Bedford, in the preface, and perhaps find some amusement in the task. So tell me your lordship's pleasure, and I will prescribe to you what to do for me; and if you shall rouse yourself to any interest in the pursuit, it may prove really a good prescription. By doing something to assist me, you may learn to love some pursuit for yourself.

With what can Isaac Reid have filled his one-and-twenty volumes? Comments upon Shakespeare seem to keep pace with the National Debt, and will at last become equally insufferable and out of fashion; yet I should like to see his book, and would buy it if I could. There must be a mass of English learning heaped together, and his *Biog. Dramatica* is so good a work that I do not think old age can have made him make a bad one; besides, this must have been the work or amusement of his life.

I live almost as recluse a life as my neighbour, the Bassenthwaite Toad, whose history you have seen in the newspapers; only if he finds it dull I do not, for I have books, and port wine, and a view from my window. I feel as much pleasure in having finished my reviewing, as ever I did at school when

my Bible exercise was done ; and what sort of pleasure that was you may judge, by being told that one of the worst dreams that ever comes athwart my brain is, that I have those Latin verses to make. I very often have this dream, and it usually ends in a resolution to be my own master, and not make verses, and not stay any longer at school, because I am too old. It is odd that school never comes pleasantly in my dreams ; it is always either thus, or with a notion that I cannot find my book to go on with. I never dream of Oxford ; perhaps my stay was not long enough to make an impression sufficiently deep. God bless you !—Yours affectionately. R. S.

35. To S. T. Coleridge

Feb. 1804.

I am not sorry that you gave Godwin a dressing, and should not be sorry if he were occasionally to remember it with the comfortable reflection *in vino veritas* ; for, in plain truth, already it does vex me to see you so lavish of the outward and visible signs of friendship, and to know that a set of fellows, whom you do not care for and ought not to care for, boast everywhere of your intimacy, and with good reason, to the best of their understanding. You have accustomed yourself to talk affectionately, and write affectionately, to your friends, till the expressions of affection flow by habit in your conversation, and in your letters, and pass for more than they are worth ; the worst of all this is, that your letters will one day rise up in judgement against you (for be sure, that hundreds which you have forgotten, are hoarded up for some Curl or Philips of the next generation), and you will be convicted of a double dealing, which, though you do not design, you certainly do practise. And now that I *am* writing affectionately *more meo*, I will let out a little more. You say in yours to Sara, that you love and honour me ; upon my soul I believe you : but if I did not thoroughly believe it before, your saying so is the thing of all things

that would make me open my eyes and look about me to see if I were not deceived: perhaps I am too intolerant to these kind of phrases; but, indeed, when they are true, they may be excused, and when they are not, there is no excuse for them.

—— was always looking for such things, but he was a foul feeder, and my moral stomach loathes anything like froth. There is a something outlandish in saying them, more akin to a French embrace than an English shake by the hand, and I would have you leave off saying them to those whom you actually do love, that if this should not break off the habit of applying them to indifferent persons, the disuse may at least make a difference. Your feelings go naked, I cover mine with a bear-skin; I will not say that you harden yours by your mode, but I am sure that mine are the warmer for their clothing. It is possible, or probable, that I err as much as you in an opposite extreme, and may make enemies where you would make friends; but there is a danger that you may sometimes excite dislike in persons of whose approbation you would yourself be desirous. You know me well enough to know in what temper this has been written, and to know that it has been some exertion; for the same habit which makes me prefer sitting silent to offering contradiction, makes me often withhold censure when, perhaps, in strictness of moral duty, it ought to be applied. The medicine might have been sweetened perhaps; but, dear Coleridge, take the simple bitters, and leave the sweetmeats by themselves.

That ugly-nosed Godwin has led me to this. I dare say he deserved all you gave him; in fact, I have never forgiven him his abuse of William Taylor, and do now regret, with some compunction, that in my reviewal of his Chaucer I struck out certain passages of well-deserved severity. Two days of S. T. C.'s time given to ——. Another Antonio! If we are to give account for every idle hour, what will you say to this lamentable waste? Or do you expect to have them allowed to you in your purgatory score?

If he had not married again, I would have still have had some bowels of compassion for him; but to take another wife with the picture of Mary Wollstonecroft in his house! Agh! I am never ashamed of letting out my *dislikes*, however, and, what is a good thing, never afraid; so let him abuse me, and we'll be at war.

I wish you had called on Longman. That man has a kind heart of his own, and I wish you to think so: the letter he sent me was a proof of it. Go to one of his Saturday evenings; you will see a coxcomb or two, and a dull fellow or two: but you will, perhaps, meet Turner and Duppa, and Duppa is worth knowing; make yourself known to him in my name, and tell him how glad I should be to show him the Lakes. I have some hope, from Rickman's letter, that you may see William Taylor in town; that would give me great pleasure, for I am very desirous that you should meet. For universal knowledge, I believe he stands quite unrivalled; his conversation is a perpetual spring of living water; and then in every relation of life so excellent is he, that I know not any man who, in the circle of his friends, is so entirely and deservedly beloved.

36. To S. T. Coleridge

Greta Hall, March 12, 1804.

Your going abroad appeared to me so doubtful, or, indeed, so improbable an event, that the certainty comes on me like a surprise, and I feel at once what a separation the sea makes; when we get beyond the reach of mail coaches, then, indeed, distance becomes a thing perceptible. I shall often think, Coleridge, *Quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!* God grant you a speedy passage, a speedy recovery, and a speedy return! I will write regularly and often; but I know by Danvers, how irregularly letters arrive, and at how tedious a time after their date. Look in old Knolles before you go, and read the siege of Malta, it will make you feel that you are going to visit sacred

ground. I can hardly think of that glorious defence without tears.

You would rejoice with me, were you now at Keswick, at the tidings that a box of books is safely harboured in the Mersey, so that for the next fortnight I shall be more interested in the news of Fletcher [1] than of Bonaparte. It contains some duplicates of the lost cargo; among them the collection of the oldest Spanish poems, in which is a metrical romance upon the Cid. I shall sometimes want you for a Gothic etymology. Talk of the happiness of getting a great prize in the lottery! What is that to the opening a box of books! The joy upon lifting up the cover must be something like what we shall feel when Peter the Porter opens the door upstairs, and says, Please to walk in, sir. That I shall never be paid for my labour according to the current value of time and labour, is tolerably certain; but if any one should offer me £10,000 to forgo that labour, I should bid him and his money go to the devil, for twice the sum could not purchase me half the enjoyment. It will be a great delight to me in the next world to take a fly and visit these old worthies, who are my only society here, and to tell them what excellent company I found them here at the lakes of Cumberland, two centuries after they had been dead and turned to dust. In plain truth, I exist more among the dead than the living, and think more about them, and, perhaps, feel more about them. Moses has quite a passion for drawing, strong enough to be useful were he a little older. When I visit London, I will set him up in drawing-books. He was made quite happy yesterday by two drawings of Charles Fox, which happened to be in my desk, and to be just fit for him. The dissected map of England gives him his fill of delight, and he now knows the situation of all the counties in England as well as any one in the house, or, indeed, in the kingdom. I have promised him Asia; it is a pity that Africa and America are so badly divided as to be almost useless,

[1] The name of a Keswick carrier.

for this is an excellent way of learning geography, and I know by experience that what is so learnt is never forgotten. You would be amused to see the truly Catholic horror he feels at the Jews, because they do not eat pork and ham, on which account he declares he never will be an old clothes man. Sara is as fond of me as Dapper is, which is saying a good deal. As for Johnny Wordsworth, I expect to see him *walk* over very shortly; he is like the sons of the Anakim. No *M. Post* yesterday, none to-day; vexatious after the last French news. I should not suppose Moreau guilty; he is too cautious a general to be so imprudent a man.—God bless you! R. S.

37. To John Rickman

Keswick, March 30, 1804.

My dear Rickman,—Turner wrote to me and complained heavily of Scotch criticism, which he seems to feel too much; such things only provoke me to interject Fôol! and Booby! seasoned with the participle damnatory; but as for being vexed at a review—I should as soon be fevered by a flea-bite! I sent him back a letter of encouragement and stimulant praise, for these rascals had so affected him as to slacken his industry. I look upon the invention of reviews to be the worst injury which literature has received since its revival. People formerly took up a book to learn from it, and with a feeling of respectful thankfulness to the man who had spent years in acquiring that knowledge, which he communicates to them in a few hours; now they only look for faults. Everybody is a critic, that is, every reader imagines himself superior to the author, and reads his book that he may censure it, not that he may improve by it.

You are in great measure right about Coleridge; he is worse in body than you seem to believe, but the main cause lies in his own management of himself, or rather want of management. His mind is in a perpetual St. Vitus's dance—eternal activity without

action. At times he feels mortified that he should have done so little; but his feeling never produces any exertion. I will begin to-morrow, he says, and thus he has been all his life long letting to-day slip. He has had no heavy calamities in life, and so contrives to be miserable about trifles. Poor fellow! there is no one thing which gives me so much pain as the witnessing such a waste of unequalled power. I knew one man resembling him, save that with equal genius he was actually a vicious man.

If that man had common prudence, he must have been the first man in this country, from his natural and social advantages, and as such, we who knew him and loved him at school used to anticipate him. I learnt more from his conversation than any other man ever taught me, because the rain fell when the young plant was just germinating and wanted it most; and I learnt more morality by his example than anything else could have taught me, for I saw him wither away. He is dead and buried at the Cape of Good Hope, and has left behind him nothing to keep his memory alive. A few individuals only remember him with a sort of horror and affection, which just serves to make them melancholy whenever they think of him or mention his name. This will not be the case with Coleridge; the *disjecta membra* will be found if he does not die early: but having so much to do, so many errors to weed out of the world which he is capable of eradicating, if he does die without doing his work, it would half break my heart, for no human being has had more talents allotted.

Wordsworth will do better, and leave behind him a name, unique in his way; he will rank among the very first poets, and probably possesses a mass of merits superior to all, except only Shakespeare. This is doing much, yet would he be a happier man if he did more.

I am made very happy by a reinforcement of folios from Lisbon, and I shall feel some reluctance in leaving them, and breaking off work to go to London for a

more trifling employment; however, my *History* is to be considered as the capital laid by—the savings of industry. And you would think me entitled to all the praise industry can merit, were you to see the pile of papers.—Vale! R. S.

38. To Miss Barker

Keswick, August 5, 1804.

Where are you? what are you about? when are you coming?—are you in Wales? are you in England? are you at Cardiff? are you at Tredegar? are you at Merthyr Tydvil? I have a few questions to ask you, Senhora. How is Mr. Maber? How is Mrs. Maber? Are there any Master Mabers? Are there any Miss Mabers? Are they like their father? How is your uncle Jerry? How is your aunt Jerry? How are all your uncles? How are all your aunts? How are all your cousins? Are the walls in Wales as good as they are at Cintra? Why have you not set out for Keswick? Why have you not told us when you mean to set out? Do you mean to set out at all? Do you ever mean to come? Do you never mean to come? This is the last time of asking! Are you in Staffordshire? Is this letter directed right? Is it directed wrong? How ought it to be directed? How can I tell how to direct it? Do you like to be asked questions? Do you admire the catechistical form of epistolizing? Are you sensible of the beauty of the ?? Do you not see the line of beauty in the note of interrogation? Where is the bacon? Is it set off? Is it not set off? Is it gone by waggon? Is it gone by canal? Is it gone to the d—— ? Do you not know that bacon is the lawful spouse of beans? How then shall man or woman presume to put them asunder? Have you forgotten that beans wax old? yea, and peas also? or is the bacon coming with you? or are we never to see either you or the bacon? Shall I ask any more questions? or shall I have done querying? Yea or nay?

Come to Keswick. *Come!* COME!! COME!!! COME!!!! Half the calling would bring Dapper upstairs, though this be forbidden ground, and shall a dog be thus obedient, and you still disobey?

Come! here is an artistic chair just arrived. Where is the artist who is to sit in it?

COME!! here is a whole bed, make haste lest there should be only half-a-one.

COME!!! I want to have my child christened; and would you let her continue a heathen?

COME!!!! and see Skiddaw, and walk over the bridge of my own making, and be introduced to my dog Dapper, my most particular and intimate friend.

COME! R. S.

39. To Charles Danvers, Bristol

Keswick, Jan. 15, 1805.

Dear Danvers,—It is so long since you have written, that I begin to look with some anxiety for tidings of you. I have letters from Tom twice since my last. The first to say that he had been brought to a court-martial by his captain for disobedience of orders, neglect of duty, and contempt of his superior officer. The two first charges were not proved; but it was proved that, when Captain Heathcote had accused him of these offences, he had replied, 'I beg your pardon, sir, I must contradict you.' This was contempt in the court-martial sense of the word, and for this he was sentenced to be dismissed the ship. He now writes me word that Commodore Hood, having seen the minutes of the trial, and spoken with some of the captains who were on it, has made him first lieutenant of the *Amelia*, a much finer frigate than the one he has left, and speaks so highly of him, that his present captain says he expects to see him a commander in six months. The commodore has even said he was fitter to command the *Galatea* than Heathcote.

As soon as his first letter arrived I wrote hastily to

bid him draw on you for £30. While I was writing the second letter, after some days, lest the first should have miscarried, Wynn, to whom I had told the story, very unexpectedly, wrote to say that, if £50 would be of any help to Tom, it was at my disposal for him. As things now stand I take it for granted he will not draw; but, if he should, do you honour his drafts, and the money shall be remitted to you as speedily as the post will admit. This prevented him from being in the affair of the *Lilly*; he was under arrest, and could not go; and the lieutenant who went in his place fell. Still I am uneasy about him, for the yellow fever was raging on board his ship, having killed Lord Proby (a cousin of Wynn's), the first lieutenant, whose stead Tom now supplies.

No news of Coleridge for so very long a time, that I am really very anxious about him, though I remember how long you often were without letters from the Mediterranean. We go on well. The Edithling thrives as we could wish; she has as yet only two teeth, which came without inconvenience, and we daily expect the two upper ones to make their appearance. Edith is very well, and fatter than ever you saw her, and I myself just as usual; or, as to the eyes, better than usual.

The printer lags with *Madoc*; six sheets of the notes are done, and there are about six more to do, which he unwarrantably loiters about. When you write tell me how your copy is to be directed; I will send King's with it, and one which I will beg you to ship for Tom to Barbadoes, directed to the care of Mr. Nathan Jackson. Will you believe that Tom has actually eat some land-crabs, and thinks them most excellently good?—miracles will never cease. He has promised to bring me home a brace, which I shall keep in a cage, like singing birds, for the amusement of all my acquaintance.

I am still annualizing; more work coming on just as I fancy it is over. Hamilton the Critical is broke, and in my debt; something from £10 to £30, which

I could not make him settle, and which is now gone to the dogs. It is provoking to recollect how much more pleasantly the hours bestowed upon him ought to have been employed. It seems —— has bought the *Review*, which is rather a good thing; for, though that fellow is the most complete and perfect rascal this day existing, he takes the right side in politics, and is likely to keep it.

Hartley is from home, visiting Mr. Wordsworth's sisters near Penrith. It is impossible to give you any adequate idea of his oddities; for he is the oddest of all God's creatures, and becomes quainter and quainter every day. It is not easy to conceive, what is perfectly true, that he is totally destitute of anything like modesty, yet without the slightest tinge of impudence in his nature. His religion makes one of the most humorous parts of his character. 'I'm a boy of a very religious turn,' he says; for he always talks of himself, and examines his own character, just as if he was speaking of another person, and as impartially. Every night he makes an extempore prayer aloud; but it is always in bed, and not till he is comfortable there and got into the mood. When he is ready he touches Mrs. Wilson, who sleeps with him, and says, 'Now listen!' and off he sets like a preacher. If he has been behaving amiss, away he goes for the Bible, and looks out for something appropriate to his case in the Psalms or the Book of Job. The other day, after he had been in a violent passion, he chose out a chapter against wrath. 'Ah! that suits me!' The Bible also is resorted to whenever he ails anything, or else the Prayer-book. He once made a pun upon occasion of the bellyache, though I will not say that he designed it. 'Oh, Mrs. Wilson, *I'se* got the *colic!* read me the Epistle and Gospel for the day.' In one part of his character he seems to me strikingly to resemble his father,—in the affection he has for those who are present with him, and the little he cares about them when he is out of their sight. It is not possible for one human being to love another more dearly than Mrs. Wilson loves him, and he is as fond of her as it is in his nature to

be of anything, and probably loves her better than he does anybody else. Last summer she was dangerously ill, and Hartley in consequence came and lived at home. He never manifested the slightest uneasiness or concern about her, nor ever would go near her. I do not know whether I should wish to have such a child or not. There is not the slightest evil in his disposition, but it wants something to make it steadily good; physically and morally there is a defect of courage. He is afraid of receiving pain to such a degree that, if any person begins to read a newspaper, he will leave the room, lest there should be anything shocking in it. This is the explication of his conduct during Mrs. Wilson's illness. He would not see her because it would give him pain, and when he was out of sight he contrived to forget her. I fear that, if he lives, he will dream away life like his father, too much delighted with his own ideas ever to embody them, or suffer them, if he can help it, to be disturbed. I gave him *Robinson Crusoe* two years ago. He never has read, nor will read, beyond Robinson's departure from the island. 'No,' he says; he does not care about him afterwards, and never will know. You will find infinite amusement from him when you come to visit us. I have a noble jackass, which you will find of use, for you must not fatigue yourself; and, by John's help, twelve or sixteen miles may be accomplished without exertion. Edith's love. How are my friends Cupid and Joe? You abuse Richardson's *Correspondence* properly; but how delightful are the letters of Klopstock's wife there! God bless you.

R. SOUTHEY.

40. To C. W. W. WYNN

March 5, 1805.

DEAR WYNN,—I have read Scott's poem[1] this evening, and like it much. It has the fault of mixed language which you mentioned, and which I expected; and it has the same obscurity, or, to speak more accurately,

[1] 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel.'

the same want of perspicuousness, as his *Glenfinlas*. I suspect that Scott did not write poetry enough when a boy, for he has little command of language. His vocabulary of the obsolete is ample; but in general his words march up stiffly, like half-trained recruits,—neither a natural walk, nor a measured march which practice has made natural. But I like his poem, for it is poetry, and in a company of strangers I would not mention that it had any faults. The beginning of the story is too like Coleridge's *Christobell*, which he had seen; the very line, 'Jesu Maria, shield her well!' is caught from it. When you see the *Christobell*, you will not doubt that Scott has imitated it; I do not think designedly, but the echo was in his ear, not for emulation, but *propter amorem*. This only refers to the beginning, which you will perceive attributes more of magic to the lady than seems in character with the rest of the story.

If the sale of *Madoc* should prove that I can afford to write poetry, *Kehama* will not lie long unfinished. After lying fallow since the end of October, I feel prolific propensities that way.

My book ought to be delivered before this, upon the slowest calculation. I pray you compare the conscientious type of my notes with that of Scott's; and look in his title-page, at the cruelty with which he has actually split Paternoster Row. God bless you!

R. S.

41. To William Taylor

Keswick, March 9, 1805.

My dear Friend,—Thank you for what you say about Harry at the vacation, and thank you as truly as if your invitation were needful. We stay here the summer, and here he may come if he pleases: I suppose he likes Keswick well enough to repeat his visit. He has a wish to write a *History of the Crusades*, which I encourage in him as a worthy and adequate object; and, if the inclination continue in him, shall set him to learn Arabic for the purpose, which he is young

enough to do. He will not, I think, object to begin the language. The subject is happily chosen for his chivalrous feelings, and for its own splendour and exceeding importance.

Pray you do not mention Tom again by the title of Mr. I have uncles of the name of Mister, but no brother; and if ever you and Tom should meet under my roof, as by God's blessing I hope you may, he will meet you with a very un-Misterlike sort of feeling, as his brother Harry's best friend; and you would leave him with a great liking for a man who has all the good parts of a sailor without the bad ones, and enough of the costume without the pedantry. I love Tom dearly. We are near enough of an age to have all brotherly recollections of boyhood, and to have had our first serious feelings in common,—to have partaken of family distress, when Harry was too young to know anything about it; so that as far as regards all my earliest life and remembrances, Tom is to me the best of my family. I do not think that ever human being had a more affectionate heart. If he lives, he is now on the road to promotion.

Coleridge never began his *Life of Lessing*. He made very ample collections for the introduction, which would have been a history of German literature,—*very ample*, for I have seen them; but concerning Lessing nothing was ever written, and in all probability never will. He has certainly given up the intention altogether.

Review *Madoc* in the *Annual*. I was in hopes you would have done it in the *Critical* also. We have talked here of the facility of writing satire defensively, if need were,—only talked, and without the slightest intention of so doing; but if such retaliation were ever provoked from me, and Mr. Hunt should be one of the aggressors, what a happy motto would the old song furnish, *A hunting we will go!* I hope by this time you have received *Madoc*.

Would I could send you to another Review! for you like the work; and much as I dislike reviews for the mischief they inevitably do, yet as they will

continue to exist, it is of consequence to occupy the post. Are any of the new ones worth entering into ? You have only to offer, and they will jump at such a prize. Your anecdote of St. Cuthbert and the gout should be sent to my friend Kinglake, who, I suspect, will cure ninety-nine patients by the practice and kill the hundredth. He writes abominably ill, but is a man of sterling sense in all things.

I am historifying *totis viribus*, and should any circumstances bring or send my uncle to England, should in all likelihood put my first volume to press next winter. *Me iudice*, I am a good poet, but a better historian ; because though I read other poets, and am humbled, I read other historians with a very different feeling. They who have talents want industry or virtue ; they who have industry want talents. One writes like a French sensualist, another like a Scotch scoundrel, calculating how to make the most per sheet with the least expense of labour ; one like a slave, another like a fool. Now I know myself to be free from these staminal defects, and feel that, where the subject deserves it, I write with a poet's feeling, without the slightest affectation of style or ornament, going always straightforward to the meaning by the shortest road. My golden rule is to relate *everything* as briefly, as perspicuously, as rememberably as possible. I begin, however, to feel my brain budding for poetry, having lain fallow since November, and if I could afford to do it, should willingly finish *Kehama* ; but being, like Shakespeare's apothecary, lean, and obliged to do what I do not like, my ways and means lead me another way, and I am prosing, not altogether against my will, and yet not with my will.

Poor Wordsworth is almost heart-broken by the loss of his brother in the *Abergavenny*,—his best and favourite brother. I have been twice over with him, and never witnessed such affliction as his and his sister's. Will you not come up to us before we quit the country that you may see him ?—if for no other motive ; for soberly and solemnly I do believe, that of

all the present generation he will leave behind him the most durable and valuable memorials: this I say knowingly of what he has written, hardly expecting credit, even from you.

What proportion of your debt from Hamilton do you recover? I know not what my own is,—perhaps as much more than I expected as yours has proved,—and therefore ask to know whether it be worth while to make any inquiry concerning it. I love Milton too well to like Bishop Hall; the style of the latter is less pregnant than yours. I have just read Walter Scott's poem with great delight: his phraseology is sometimes polluted with modern barbarisms, and sometimes obscure from a sort of unnatural syntax which he seems to like; but it is a delightful poem, and I am ashamed to think that I should speak of its faults, which are so infinitesimally little in comparison with its beauties. His conception of story is singularly happy in this as in his ballads; of character there is as much as such limits would admit. His images are often good, and sometimes, though rarely, quite excellent. I half envy him one about the foam of a turbid torrent in the first canto.

Longman is instructed to send you *Madoc*. You cannot wish to see the book more than I do to know how you like it, for I have many qualms of doubt about it. God bless you! ROBERT SOUTHEY.

42. To MRS. SOUTHEY

October 14, 1805.

I need not tell you, my own dear Edith, not to read my letters aloud till you have first of all seen what is written only for yourself. What I have now to say to you is, that having been eight days from home, with as little discomfort, and as little reason for discomfort, as a man can reasonably expect, I have yet felt so little comfortable, so great sense of solitariness, and so many homeward yearnings, that certainly I will not go to Lisbon without you; a resolution

which, if your feelings be at all like mine, will not displease you. If, on mature consideration, you think the inconvenience of a voyage more than you ought to submit to, I must be content to stay in England, as on my part it certainly is not worth while to sacrifice a year's happiness: for, though not unhappy (my mind is too active and too well disciplined to yield to any such criminal weakness), still without you I am not happy. But for your sake as well as my own, and for little Edith's sake, I will not consent to any separation; the growth of a year's love between her and me, if it please God that she should live, is a thing too delightful in itself, and too valuable in its consequences, both to her and me, to be given up for any light inconveniences either on your part or mine. An absence of a year would make her effectually forget me. But of these things we will talk at leisure; only, dear dear Edith, we must not part. Last night we saw the young Roscius in Douglas; this was lucky and unexpected. He disappointed me. I could tell you precisely how, and how he pleased me on the other hand, but that this would take time, and the same sort of thought as in reviewing; and in letter-writing I love to do nothing *more* than just say what is uppermost. This evening I meet Jeffrey and Brougham at Thomson's rooms. I know not if Harry knows him; he is the person who reviewed Miss Seward, and is skilful in manuscripts. Among the books I have bought is a little work of Boccaccio, for which my uncle has been looking many years in vain, so extremely rare is it. Its value here was not known, and it cost me only three shillings; being, I conceive, worth as many guineas. I have likewise found the old translation of Camoens.

The third sitting will finish the letter. Thomson brought with him the review of *Madoc* (which will be published in about ten days), sent to me by Jeffrey, who did not like to meet me till I had seen it. There was some sort of gentlemanlike decency in this, as the review is very unfair and very uncivil, though

mixed up with plenty of compliments, and calculated to serve the book in the best way, by calling attention to it and making it of consequence. Of course I shall meet him with perfect courtesy, just giving him to understand that I have as little respect for his opinions as he has for mine; thank him for sending me the sheets, and then turn to other subjects. Since breakfast we have been walking to Calton Hill and to the Castle, from which heights I have seen the city and the neighbouring country to advantage. I am far more struck by Edinburgh itself than I expected, far less by the scenery around it. God bless you, my own dear Edith.

R. S

43. To Charles Danvers

Nov. 7, 1805.

Dear Danvers,—It is very long since I have written to you: meantime, you have heard of my intention to visit Portugal next year, and of my journey to Edinburgh. Of both these subjects I have something to say.

My uncle advised me to go over this winter with my family. This was impossible, as there is a pretty hard winter's work before me. I shall go in the spring if Edith does not choose to accompany me; most likely in the autumn if she does, which indeed I expect. It would then be advisable, or at least pleasant, to pass one more summer here, and to have the young one a few months older. My uncle advises us to come by Carvalho's ship from Bristol. At any rate we shall come to Bristol, if not to go by him, on our way to Falmouth. In case of Edith's going, I shall make up my mind to, at least, a two years' residence, and of course leave Mrs. Lovell in England. Edith does not like going; but she ought to go, and I believe will. At all events, my going is so resolved a thing, that I have desired Longman and King Arthur to fill up my place in the fifth *Annual Review*, and after this year shall have done with that sort of work for ever and ever, Amen.

Elmsley and I spent three days with Walter Scott on our way to Edinburgh. He inquired for you, and desired to be remembered when I wrote. Camp is in good health, and put up a hare, which Percy and Douglas, the two greyhounds, caught in a minute, and which made part of our next day's dinner.

I saw Newark, and Branksome, and Melrose, the Tiviot and the Yarrow, and went salmon-spearing upon the Tweed. When we reached the great city Jeffrey was invited by a friend of Elmsley's to meet me at supper. As his review of *Madoc* was then printed though not published, he thought proper to send it me first, that I might meet him or not, as I felt disposed. This was gentlemanly conduct. Having been reviewed now above three-score times, it is not very likely that I should feel much affected by praise or censure. I met him in good humour, which, if I had not been disposed so to do, I could not have helped, on seeing an *homunculus* of five foot one, with a face which upon a larger scale would be handsome, but can now only be called pretty, ēēnunciating his words as if he had studied *ee*locution under John Thelwall, of whom indeed he is an Elzevir edition in better binding. After supper we got upon the general question of taste. You would have been amused to have seen how he flourished about, endeavouring to imply an apology without making one, and talking *at* what he did not talk of,—and how I, on my part, without mentioning his review quoted its phrases occasionally, took up his principles of criticism without once referring to their application, and in the best-natured way in the world, made him fully sensible that he was—but five foot one! Upon my soul, I cannot feel offended with a thing so insignificant. He has wit and readiness, but in taste and learning so mere a child, and so utterly feeble in intellect, that I was actually astonished. Indeed the whole corps of Edinburgh reviewers appear miserably puny to me, who have been accustomed to live with strong men. Jeffrey came back in the stage with us,

to visit the Lakes, and supped here ; so you see we are good friends. What I condemn in him is, a habit of speaking of books worse than he thinks of them,—because ill-natured things are said with better effect than good-natured ones, and liked better ; and for the sake of selling his *Reviews* he often abuses books in print which he makes no scruple to praise in conversation. But his praise and his censure are alike haphazard and worthless.

Edith instructed me to rig myself anew at Edinburgh, with coat, hat, pantaloons, and boots, which I meant to do ; but considering that cash was low with me, and that if learning was better than house and land, it certainly must be much better than fine apparel, which is but vanity, I resolved to make the old clothes last till next summer, and accordingly laid out the money at the bookseller's instead of the tailor's ! And a good boxful did I send home, which it does my heart good to look at, now that they are arranged in due order upon the shelves.

I have just begun my reviewing—and, alas ! my eyes this very day begin to ail again. Dr. Aikin has applied to me for Spanish and Portuguese literary lives in his Biography, which I have undertaken. What with this and with Don Manuel, my winter will be fully and laboriously employed ; but it will set me even with the world, and leave me the Spaniard over and above. At Christmas I will send you a draft. Of the sale of *Madoc* I know nothing, and expect little ; of its ultimate effect on my reputation, and thereby on my well-doing, I have no doubt. Almost I am tempted to trouble you to hunt for the books about the Cid, that I might make a volume sure of popularity and of sale, which could be done almost without labour.

No letter from Tom of a later date than the last of July, and then he had the fever worse than at any former attack. I am uneasy, but have been recollecting that ill news always travels fast, and that in silence therefore there is nothing which ought to alarm me.

For politics, I am quite sick at heart: the worst news of all is the Duke of York's appointment, the most infamous and shameless acquiescence on the part of Pitt, for the sake of keeping his place! Oh, for a day of reckoning! The Peacheys went yesterday. Edith's remembrances. God bless you. R. S.

44. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Jan. 1, 1806.

Dear Grosvenor,—You use Godwin's name as if he had maliciously reviewed *Madoc*, which I do not by any means suspect or believe, though he has all the will in the world to make me feel his power. The *Monthly* was rather more dull than he would have made it. I should well like to know who the writer is; for, by the Living Jingo,—a deity whom D. Manuel conceives to have been worshipped by the Celts,—I would contrive to give him a most righteous clapper-clawing in return.

Thalaba is faulty in its language. *Madoc* is not. I am become what they call a Puritan in Portugal, with respect to language, and I dare assert, that there is not a single instance of illegitimate English in the whole poem. The faults are in the management of the story and the conclusion, where the interest is injudiciously transferred from Madoc to Yuhidthiton; it is also another fault, to have rendered *accidents* subservient to the catastrophe. You will see this very accurately stated in the *Annual Review*: the remark is new, and of exceeding great value. I acknowledge no fault in the execution of any magnitude, except the struggle of the women with Amalahta, which is all clumsily done, and must be rewritten. Those faults which are inherent in and inseparable from the story, as they could not be helped, so are they to be considered as defects or *wants* rather than faults. I mean the division of the poem into two separate stories and scenes, and the inferior interest of the voyage, though a thing of such consequence. But as for unwarrantable libertics

of language—there is not a solitary sin of the kind in the whole 9,000 lines. Let me be understood: I call it an unwarrantable liberty to use a verb deponent, for instance, actively, or to form any compound contrary to the strict analogy of the language—such as *tameless* in *Thalaba*, applied to the tigress. I do not recollect any coinage in *Madoc* except the word *deicide*; and that such a word exists I have no doubt, though I cannot lay my finger upon an authority, for depend upon it the Jews have been called so a thousand times. That word is unobjectionable. It is in strict analogy—its meaning is immediately obvious, and no other word could have expressed the same meaning. Archaisms are faulty if they are too obsolete. *Thewes* is the only one I recollect; that also has a peculiar meaning, for which there is no equivalent word. But, in short, so very laboriously was *Madoc* rewritten and corrected, time after time, that I will pledge myself, if you ask me in any instance why one word stands in the place of another which you, perhaps, may think the better one, to give you a reason, (most probably, *euphoniae gratiâ*,) which will convince you that I had previously weighed both in the balance. Sir, the language and versification of that poem are as full of profound mysteries as the Butler; and he, I take it, was as full of profundity as the great deep itself.

I do not know any one who has understood the main merit of the poem so nearly as I wished it to be understood as yourself: the true and intrinsic greatness of Madoc, the real talents of his enemies, and (which I consider as the main work of skill) the feeling of respect for them;—of love even for the individuals, yet with an abhorrence of the *national* cruelties that perfectly reconcile you to their dreadful overthrow. You have very well expressed this.

I have written this at two days,—many sittings,—under the influence of influenza and antimony. I am mending, but very weak, and sufficiently uncomfortable. R. S.

Jan. 1. Multos et felices.

45. To the Rev. Nicholas Lightfoot

Keswick, Feb. 8, 1806.

My dear Friend,—You tell me to write as an egotist, and I am well disposed so to do; for what else is it that gives private letters their greatest value, but the information they bring us of those for whom we are interested? I saw your marriage in the papers, and perhaps one reason why my letter has remained so long unfinished in my desk is, a sort of fear lest I should mention it after death might have dissolved it,—a sort of superstitious feeling to which I am subject. I wish you—being a father myself—as large a family as you can comfortably bring up, and if you are not provided with a godfather upon the next occasion, I beg you to accept of me, as an old and very affectionate friend; 'tis a voluntary kind of relationship, in which it would gratify me to stand to a child of yours, and which I should consider as a religious pledge on my part for any useful, kind, and fatherly offices which it might ever happen to be in my power to perform.

I have for some time looked on with pleasure to the hope of seeing you next autumn, when, in all probability, if the situation of affairs abroad does not prevent me, I shall once more visit Portugal, not for health's sake, but to collect the last materials for my history, and to visit those parts of the kingdom which I have not yet seen. In this case my way will lie through Devonshire, and I will stop a day or two at Crediton, and talk over old times.

You inquire of the wreck of the Seward family, —a name as dear to my inmost heart as it can be to yours. No change has taken place among them for some years, as I understand from Duppa, who was my guest here the autumn before last, and with whom I have an occasional correspondence.

I passed through Oxford two years ago, and walked through the town at four o'clock in the morning; the

place never before appeared to me half so beautiful. I looked up at my own windows, and, as you may well suppose, felt as most people do when they think of what changes time brings about.

If you have seen or should see the *Annual Review*, you may like to know that I have borne a great part in it thus far, and I may refer you for the state of my opinions to the Reviewals of the *Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Mission*, vol. i, of Malthus's *Essay on Population*, Miles's *History of the Methodists*, and the *Transactions of the Missionary Society*, vol. ii and iii, and of the *Report of the Society for the Suppression of Vice*, vol. iii. In other articles you may trace me from recollections of your own, by family likeness, by a knowledge of Spanish literature, and by a love of liberty and literature freely and warmly expressed. I was ministerial under Addington, regarded his successor with the utmost indignation, and am exceedingly well pleased at the present changes. Time, you say, moderates opinions as it mellows wine. My views and hopes are certainly altered, though the heart and soul of my wishes continues the same. It is the world that has changed, not I. I took the same way in the afternoon that I did in the morning, but sunset and sunrise make a different scene. If I regret anything in my own life, it is that I *could* not take orders, for of all ways of life that would have best accorded with my nature; but I could not get in at the door.

In other respects time has not much altered me. I am as thin as ever, and to the full as noisy: making a noise in any way whatever is an animal pleasure with me, and the louder it is the better. Do you remember the round hole at the top of the staircase, opposite your door?

Coleridge is daily expected to return from Malta, where he has been now two years for his health. I inhabit the same house with his wife and children,—perhaps the very finest single spot in England. We overlook Keswick Lake, have the Lake of Bassenthwaite in the distance on the other side, and Skiddaw

behind us. But we only sojourn here for a time. I may, perhaps, be destined to pass some years in Portugal,—which, indeed, is my wish,—or, if otherwise, must ultimately remove to the neighbourhood of London, for the sake of the public libraries.

My dislike was not to schoolmasters, but to the rod, which I dare warrant you do not make much use of. Here is a long letter, and you have in it as many great I's as your heart can wish. It will give me much pleasure to hear again from you, and to know that your family is increased. If I cannot be godfather now, let me put in a claim in time for the next occasion; but I hope you will write to tell me that three things have been promised and vowed in *my* name by proxy. No man can more safely talk of defying the world, the flesh, and the devil. With the world my pursuits are little akin; the flesh and I quarrelled long ago, and I have been nothing but skin and bone ever since; and as for the devil, I have made more ballads in his abuse than anybody before me.

God bless you, Lightfoot!—Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

46. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

July 5, 1806.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—I thought it so likely you would hear from Wynn the particulars concerning John Southey's will, that I felt no inclination to repeat the story to you, which would not have been the case had the old man done as he ought to have done. Good part of his property, consisting of a newly purchased estate, is given to a very distant relative of his mother's family, and, of course, gone for ever. About £2,000 in legacies: the rest falls to his brother, as sole executor and residuary legatee. Neither my own name nor either of my brothers' is mentioned. Thomas Southey apprised me of this the day of the old man's death. With him I am on good terms,—that is, if we were in the same town, we should dine together, for the sake

of relationship, about once a month; and if anything were to happen to me, of any kind of family importance,—such as the birth of a child,—I should write a letter to him, beginning 'Dear Uncle'. He invites me to the 'Cottage', and I shall go there on my way to Lisbon. I think it likely that he will leave his property rather to Tom than to me, for the name's sake, but not likely that he will leave it out of the family. He is about three or four-and-fifty, a man of no education, nor indeed of anything else. And so you have all that I can tell you about the matter, excepting that there's an end of it. Some people, they say, are born with silver spoons in their mouths, and others with wooden ladles. I will hope something for my daughter, upon the strength of this proverb, inasmuch as she has three silver cups; but, for myself, I am of the fraternity of the wooden ladle.

Last night I began the Preface [1]—huzza! And now, Grosvenor, let me tell you what I have to do. I am writing, 1. *The History of Portugal;* 2. *The Chronicle of the Cid;* 3. *The Curse of Kehama;* 4. *Espriella's Letters.* Look you, all these *I am* writing. The second and third of these must get into the press, and out of it before this time twelvemonths, or else I shall be like the Civil List. By way of interlude comes in this Preface. Don't swear, and bid me do one thing at a time. I tell you I can't afford to do one thing at a time—no, nor two neither; and it is only by doing many things that I contrive to do so much: for I cannot work long together at anything without hurting myself; and so I do everything by heats; then, by the time I am tired of one, my inclination for another is come round.

Dr. Southey is arrived here. He puts his degree in his pocket, summers here, and will winter in London, to attend at an hospital. About this, of course, I shall apply to Carlisle; and, if it should so happen that you do not see him here, shall give him a direction to you when he goes to London. R. S.

[1] To the *Specimens of English Poets.*

47. To Neville White

Keswick, Dec. 20, 1806.

Dear Sir,—Your letter and parcel arrived yesterday, just as I had completed the examination of the former papers. I have now examined the whole.

What account of your brother shall be given it rests with you, sir, and his other nearest friends, to determine. I advise and *entreat* that it may be as full and as minute as possible. The example of a young man winning his way against great difficulties, of such honourable ambition, such unexampled industry, such a righteous and holy confidence of genius, ought not to be withheld. A full and faithful narrative of his difficulties, his hopes, and his eventual success, till it pleased God to promote him to a higher state of existence, will be a lasting encouragement to others who have the same uphill path to tread;—he will be to them what Chatterton was to him, and he will be a purer and better example. If it would wound the feelings of his family to let all and every particular of his honourable and admirable life be known, those feelings are, of course, paramount to every other consideration. But I sincerely hope this may not be the case. It will, I know, be a painful task to furnish me with materials for this, which is the most useful kind of biography, yet, when the effort of beginning such a task shall have been accomplished, the consciousness that you are doing for him what he would have wished to be done, will bring with it a consolation and a comfort.

Let me beg of you and of your family, when you can command heart for the task, to give me all your recollections of his childhood and of every stage of his life. Do not fear you can be too minute; I will arrange them, insert such poems as will best appear in that place, and add such remarks as grow out of the circumstances. The narrative itself cannot be told too plainly; all ornament of style would be misplaced

in it,—that which is meant to tickle the ear will never find its way either to the understanding or the heart.

Respecting the mode of publication, you had better consult Mr. ——. The booksellers will, beyond a doubt, undertake to publish them on condition of halving the eventual profits,—which are the terms on which I publish. The profit, I fear, will not be much, unless the public should be taken with some unusual fit of good feeling; and, indeed, this is not unlikely, for they are more frequently just to the dead than to the living.

I shall be glad to see all his magazine publications; possibly some of the pieces marked by me for transcription may be found among them. There is one poem, printed in the *Globe* for Feb. 11, 1803, which I remember noticing when it appeared, and which may be more easily copied from the newspaper than from the manuscript. Whether any of his prose writings should be inserted, I shall better be able to judge after having seen the magazines. But the most valuable materials which could be entrusted to me would be his letters,—the more that could be said of him in his own words the better.

I have been affected at seeing my own name among your brother's papers;—there is a defence of *Thalaba*, a part of which I regard as the most discriminating and appropriate praise which I have received. It seems to have been published in some magazine. These are the highest gratifications which a writer can receive;—for that class of readers who call themselves the public I have as little respect as need be; but to interest and influence such a mind as Henry White's is the best and worthiest object which any poet could propose to himself—the fulfilment of his dearest hopes.
—Yours truly, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

48. To LIEUTENANT SOUTHEY, H.M.S. 'DREADNOUGHT'

Keswick, Dec. 21, 1806.

MY DEAR TOM,—I promised to write by this post; writing, you see, I am, though how the letter is to be

filled, unless the mail brings me any tidings to communicate, is more than I can guess. The Doctor's rascally handwriting, indeed, might easily enable me to do it; but it is as provoking to receive a sheet scrawled over with a mouthful of meaning, as to call for spruce beer, when one is thirsty, and get a glassful of froth.

All Friday morning, before you came from Brathay, I devoted to the papers of poor Henry White, being too uncomfortable for any other employment. I resumed them after you were gone,—the additional ones came that evening, and that evening I fairly overhauled the whole. I have marked for transcription such as should be published, and have desired that they may be transcribed, each on a separate paper, for the convenience of arrangement. They are numerous, and many of them very beautiful. If his family will supply me with as full materials as I have requested, for an account of him, I shall do what remains to be done with great pleasure. Poor fellow! his industry was at least equal to Chatterton's; his genius, in my judgement, nothing inferior; and his life seems to have been without spot or stain. The papers go back to-morrow, to his brother, that he may see to the transcription, and Edith is copying, for you, his remarks on *Thalaba*.

Last night I thought of you, at the Bridgewater Arms, and that when you were in that huge warehouse-looking room you would be thinking of me. You will now have left Birmingham, and must be in the coach for a second night's journey. 'Tis a dismal distance, and heartily glad shall I be to hear you are safe at the end of it. We miss you: your place in the room seems to want its occupier. I must put your box of water-colours out of sight, and send away the plate and teacup—still lying under the sideboard—which you used when colouring; not that out of sight is, can, or ought to be, out of mind, but that there is something in having these things always in sight, which is like being haunted. I have heard of men who, when their wives have died, have suffered everything belonging to

the dead to remain precisely as they left it for years and years—the music-book open, the shawl thrown across the chair, the fan or the parasol on the table,—and this till they died themselves. This is insanity, but one can understand its nature and growth. If ever I should become insane, it will not be in this way. There is the same excuse for drunkenness and debauchery as for over-sensibility. Twelve years ago I carried *Epictetus* in my pocket, till my very heart was ingrained with it, as a pig's bones become red by feeding him upon madder. And the longer I live, and the more I learn, the more am I convinced that Stoicism, properly understood, is the best and noblest system of morals. If you have never read the book, buy Mrs. Carter's translation of it whenever it comes in your way. Books of morals are seldom good for anything; the stoical books are an exception. In morals, as in everything else, one should aim high.

What a difference has one week made in this house! Nurse gone—'Old love God and be cheerful', as Coleridge calls her,—Coleridge and Job gone, and now you also. I tell Mrs. Coleridge, and make her half-angry by the name I have given her—

> The only society I have left now,
> Is Bumble-cum-tumble and Doggy-bow-wow,

meaning her and the heir to the books. However, we have a black cat come to us, and everybody says that it is the luckiest thing in the world. You are gone at the wrong time. To-day has been fine weather; it is the shortest day, and it is always a joyful thing to turn the corner, and begin lengthening time again. The frost ought to be setting in, and probably will: we shall have the lake frozen, and I shall want a companion in my walks.

Betty is coming for 'the letters'. I must have done, which is well, having nothing to write about. So now to finish Captain Burney. Edith's love. Your niece is in bed. I tell her you are going to be in a great ship, upon the great waters, and she says when I

have done, 'sing it again.' Sarah says, 'her papa is not pretty, but that her uncle Southey is pretty, oh very pretty!' And my daughter, you know, looks in my face and says, 'you *is* a beauty,'—have I not reason to be vain? God bless you. R. S.

49. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Jan. 2, 1807.

My dear Grosvenor,—Judging of your complaint by your medicine, I suppose your liver is affected. Now, though calomel is usually the best medicine in such cases, it is not always so; and I know one instance, that of Mrs. Clarkson, wherein by immediately *pro*cribing it and *pre*scribing something else, Beddoes checked the disease, and saved the patient. For God's sake, Grosvenor, if you do not certainly feel yourself recovering by this ordinary mode of practice, state your case to Beddoes, a man who never tries experiments, except when ordinary methods would fail; and who, in liver cases, is eminently successful. This is not said from any personal liking to the man,—I do not like him,—but I have the highest respect for his professional talents, and would, in any case of illness, resign myself into his hand, with the most perfect confidence that he would do for me whatever could be done by medical skill.

As for my prose style, this is my prose style for this preface,—and, in the next prose you see of mine, which, I suppose, will be *Espriella*, you will see my prose style for that,—and when the *Cid* appears, there will be another prose style,—and so on, for my style shall always mould itself to the subject, and not my subject to my style. Sometimes it shall be a style, and sometimes a turnstile, and sometimes a five-barred gate, and sometimes such a style as we have in Cumberland, which is very like a ladder. And so, in verse as in prose, Judge Jeffrey, of the *Scotch Review*, alias Gog, abused me for not imitating Pope when I wrote *Madoc*. I said to him, 'That the style of Pope was excellent for

satire, and perhaps, if I wrote satire, I should imitate it.' 'That's a great concession,' said he. 'No, sir,' rejoined I, 'for, if it be the fit style for satire, how can it be fit for narration?' God bless you. R. S.

50. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

March 14, 1807.

Patience where there is no remedy, say my friends the Portuguese. You will consider it as an especial act of forbearance that I do not dip my pen in the very gall of bitterness.

I write by this post to Longman, ordering the following cancels, &c. &c.

Lord Chesterfield's song is in the style of Little Moore. You, I know, think me over-scrupulous; but for that very reason you should have been particularly cautious, how you selected anything immoral, and sent it into the world under the sanction of my name. As for my literary character, I am sufficiently careless about it; so much so that even the errors which deface almost every page of this book, and which upon my soul I believe are more numerous than ever appeared before in any one work, do not give me five minutes' concern; but this is not the case with respect to my character as a moralist—of that I am as jealous as a soldier of his honour.

The gap made by Chesterfield, I supply by adding something to Cunningham, which likewise gets rid of an extract from Anderson, the last man in the world from whom to quote an opinion in poetry. Whether they will apply to you for specimens from Hinchcliffe, Gildon, and Joseph Warton, or look them out themselves, I know not. I have told them that anything may be put in which fits the gap, so it be but decent. There is a safe test for such things, as I told you, when speaking upon these very poems in London,—that which a woman would not like to read aloud, ought not to be inserted. That the book should go into the world with these pieces in it, after what I have said

and written upon the subject, is very, very, very provoking.

Among the sins of omission, those of Burns and Russel may especially be noticed; the latter is the best English sonnet writer. I am surprised that you have struck out that Jack-the-Giant-Killer skit upon Leonidas, which was one of the most curious things in the book. The omissions are so very numerous, that if I thought it in the least probable that the unhappy purchasers of these three volumes would buy a supplementary one, I would publish it; and in an after edition arrange the supplementary authors in their order, and make room for them by omitting dull pieces.

Send me all the rejected materials, that I may see about arranging them for a new edition, if we should ever have that opportunity of redeeming ourselves.

Your biographies are in general good; they are disfigured by some modern barbarisms and affectations, which are, however, so common, that I suppose they will not affect a reviewer's stomach. I seriously disapprove of nothing, except the articles on Chatterton and Chesterfield. The fate of the former is no disgrace to anybody, as I shall very shortly have occasion to observe, and as for the latter, my opinion of him is precisely that which Cowper has expressed.

As for the printer's errors they are so numerous that I dare not make a list of them; nor say anything about them, except that he shall never murder my English more. Such works as this must, from their very nature, be imperfect at first; but if the printer had had Beelzebub himself for his devil, and old Harry had taken that opportunity to revenge himself upon me for my misdeeds, the book could not have been worse handled. Certainly, if I could have thought he had got into you so often, to make you leave undone those things which you ought to have done, and do those things which you ought not to have done,—change specimens for the worse, and emasculate biographies,—I would have recommended your worship to have called at the nearest

Roman Catholic chapel and washed your hands in the holy water.

Oh, dear, dear, Grosvenor! Oh, dear, dear,! Oh, dear, dear! Zounds and the devil! Oh, dear, dear! Οιμοι! Ὤιμοι! Ὀτοτοτοῖ! Zounds!

51. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, April 4, 1807.

My dear Grosvenor,—It is of all odd things in this world, the oddest (not excepting my pension), that you will persist in complaining of the booksellers, and looking to them to do what they have no more business to do, and are no more in the way of doing, than the man in the moon. Dear, dear Grosvenor! just recollect what the business of a publisher is: it is to buy and sell books, not to make them; to keep accounts with paper makers, with printers, with country booksellers in almost every town throughout the kingdom, with newspapers, with authors, with bookbinders, folders, stitchers, &c. &c. &c. &c. How in the very devil's name do you suppose that they can find time to assist the making the books they publish?

As for petty faults, such as making a man die before he was born, they are trifles, and must be let pass. Altering them with a pen would be absurd: nobody ever does such a thing except some country clergyman who prints a volume of sermons and fancies everybody will be interested in them. Let all these things alone: only out with the abominations; they affect *us*; the blunders concern the printer, and are after all of far less consequence. About Chesterfield there need be no trouble. I have remedied that, and also Buckingham. Hinchcliffe and Gildon are all that require any trouble: are they in the Museum?—if not, they will be in the Queenhithe collection, and if you were at Queenhithe, half an hour would do the business. Zounds! if I had wings upon my shoulders and could perch in London, I would do it in less time than it takes to plague you with a letter. Leave the petty errors alone: cancel

Chesterfield, Buckingham, and the Sonnet which is twice printed. Joseph Warton's works may be seen at any bookseller's, and this cannot take more time than is required for copying twenty verses. If it be not possible to get the other abominations out, why I suppose I must grin and endure it, being utterly unable to help myself.

The booksellers have determined upon a fourth volume, in consequence of the complaints of omission, the main value of the book being as a work of bibliography, and this value being materially lessened when it is known that there are above thirty names omitted in the last volume. They ask me to bring it down to the present day, which I accede to, because I believe that without so doing there will not be enough for a volume; now pray send me the papers, that my shoulders may without delay be set to the wheel. If we can get to a second edition, I will take care that the book shall be a good one; but if we do, it will be so much more than we deserve, that I shall be very greatly surprised. And now no more about these unhappy volumes: you know what can be done without any trouble at all, you know whether you can take the trouble to do what is troublesome, and if not it must be left undone; you know that there must be no pen-work of alteration, but the errors which are not worthy of standing in a table of errors must be left in their beauty; and I hope you understand that Rees must think it quite as unreasonable in you to apply to him for help, as you would think it if Hyde were to apply to you for buckram and stay tape, and ask you to thread his needle when he is making you a coat.

As you do not complain of the sale of the prints, I trust they went as well as the books. I sent what I thought a valiant commission for old Jacob Cats, but conclude that Jacob was knocked down to a more valiant bidder.

And so, Mr. Bedford, I have a pension! Some odd things have happened to me, in this world, and this is one of them. I am sorry, however, to hear that you

are not punctual, for my expenditure is exceedingly so, and drives to the very nail, as you may suppose. Perhaps I could write a better practical treatise upon the art of economizing with perfect comfort than any man living; but if once my incomings are irregular, that comfort is at an end, at least till my books prove more productive than they have ever done yet. This, I think, will be the case with my historical works, and so I live in hope. Tell me if you can, when I am to expect payment, and how it is made: the deduction, I suppose, will be, as Wynn says, a fifth, and so peace will be worth twenty pounds a year to me. Mr. Canning therefore had better begin to negotiate.

I am sorry, sorry, sorry to hear of your side and your shoulder, and wish to God you would put yourself under Beddoes. If you do not, I very seriously fear that you will go on from one attack to another, each worse than the last. The pain in the shoulder sufficiently shows that the liver is the part affected, and as plainly that all which has yet been done has only suspended the disease. If any man can cure it, Beddoes is that man: I know that lodgings and physicians are dear, but *life* is dearer. Had I been at Bristol, things might easily have been concerted. As it is, by all means go as soon as you possibly can, and I will give you a letter to Danvers, to King, and to Beddoes; the first will do for you all that a friend can do, the second all that a surgeon and a very pleasant acquaintance. God bless you.

R. S.

52. To C. W. W. Wynn

April, 1807.

My dear Wynn,—And so I am a Court Pensioner! It is well that I have not to kiss hands upon the occasion—or, upon my soul, I do not think I could help laughing at the changes and chances of this world! O dear, dear Wynn, when you and I used to hold debates with poor Bunbury over a pot of porter, how easily could your way of life have been predicted!

And how would his and mine have mocked all foresight! And yet mine has been a straight-onward path! Nothing more has taken place *in* me than the ordinary process of beer or wine—of fermenting—and settling—and ripening!

If Snowdon will come to Skiddaw in the summer, Skiddaw will go to Snowdon at the fall of the leaf. I shall work hard to get the *Cid* ready for publication, and must go with it to London. In that case my intention is to go first to Bristol, and perhaps to Taunton, and Wales will not be out of my way. But I wish to show you those parts of the country which you have not seen, and which I have since you were here; and to introduce you to the top of Skiddaw, which is an easy morning's walk.

The mystery of this wonderful history of the change in administration is certainly explained; but who are the King's advisers? Are they his sons—or old Lord Liverpool? Mr. Simeon's wise remark, that 'the new Ministry was better than no Ministry at all', put me in mind of a story which might well have been quoted in reply. One of the German Electors, when an Englishman was introduced to him, thought the best thing he could say to him, was to remark that 'it was bad weather'; upon which the Englishman shrugged up his shoulders and replied, 'yes—but it was *better than none!*' Would not this have *told* in the House? You do not shake my opinion concerning the Catholics. Their religion regards no national distinctions—it teaches them to look at Christendom and at the Pope as the head thereof—and the interests of that religion will always be preferred to anything else. Bonaparte is aware of this, and is aiming to be the head of the Catholic party in Germany.

These people have been increasing in England of late years, owing to the number of seminaries established during the French Revolution. It is worth your while to get their Almanac,—the 'Lay Directory' it is called, and published by Brown and Keating, Duke Street, Grosvenor Square. They

are at their old tricks of miracles here and everywhere else. St. Winifred has lately worked a great one, and is in as high odour as ever she was.

I am for abolishing the test with regard to every other sect—Jews and all—but not to the Catholics. They *will not tolerate*: the proof is in their whole history—in their whole system—and in their present practice all over Catholic Europe: and it is the nature of their principles *now* to spread in this country; Methodism, and the still wilder sects preparing the way for it. You have no conception of the zeal with which they seek for proselytes, nor the power they have over weak minds; for their system is as well the greatest work of human wisdom as it is of human wickedness. It is curious that the Jesuits exist in England as a body, and have possessions here; a Catholic told me this, and pointed out one in the streets of Norwich, but he could tell me nothing more, and expressed his surprise at it, and his curiosity to learn more. Having been abolished by the Pope, they keep up their order secretly, and expect their restoration, which, if he be wise, Bonaparte will effect. Were I a Catholic, that should be the object to which my life should be devoted—I would be the second Loyola.

Concessions and conciliations will not satisfy the Catholics; vengeance and the throne are what they want. If Ireland were far enough from our shores to be lost without danger to our own security, I would say establish the Catholic religion there, as the easiest way of civilizing it; but Catholic Ireland would always be at the command of the Pope, and the Pope is now at the command of France. It is dismal to think of the state of Ireland. Nothing can redeem that country but such measures as none of our statesmen, except perhaps Marquis Wellesley, would be hardy enough to adopt,—nothing but a system of Roman conquest and colonization, and shipping off the refractory to the colonies.

England condescends too much to the Catholic religion, and does not hold up her own to sufficient

respect in her foreign possessions; and the Catholics, instead of feeling this as an act of indulgence to their opinions, interpret it as an acknowledgement of their superior claims, and insult us in consequence. This is the case at Malta. In India the want of an established church is a crying evil. Nothing but missionaries can secure in that country what we have won. The converts would immediately become English in their feelings, for, like Mahomet, we ought to make our language go with our religion,—a better policy this than that of introducing pig-tails, after our own home-plan of princely reform, for which ——, with all due respect to him, or whoever else was the agent in this inconceivable act of folly, ought to be gibbeted upon the top of the highest pagoda in Hindostan. God bless you!

R. S.

53. To Miss Barker

Keswick, April 10, 1807.

The worst part of your letter is that which relates to your own health; look well to that, and time will do the rest. It is better to have a sister, that is certain; but it is better to lose her, than, for instance, to have her years in dying of a cancer, or, what is worse, of a broken heart, from the ill usage of a husband, like Mrs. ——'s sister. I am very glad you thought of Carlisle; he is truly a kind-hearted man, and even his profession has not hardened him. B—— is, perhaps, the very ablest practitioner at present living to whom you could have gone; and you may rely upon him, with the most perfect confidence, that he will do whatever can be done by human skill. He is no favourite of mine; but of his talents, I have the highest possible opinion. It is useless to afflict yourself. Against this calamity, and against still greater ones, you can bear up, and must bear up. Did you ever read Mrs. Carter's *Epictetus*? Next to the Bible, it is the best *practitional* book and the truest philosophy in existence.

As for your damned ——, or whatever they be, I could wring their necks off; and if ——'s were in my hands, his would be in some danger. This cause of trouble, however, time will wear down; the first thing the human mind does, under any affliction, is to set about bearing it,—as instinctively and as surely as *life* sets about healing a cut as soon as it is inflicted,—and, happily, few mental wounds are mortal. What other evils you alluded to, of course I cannot guess; and, perhaps, if I knew them, should not allow that they were such as ought to make you unhappy. Look to your health, and, as soon as you can, come once more to Keswick. Lakes and mountains are good friends, and will do you more good than a host of comforters, or buckets full of physic.

I have now much to tell you concerning myself; and had, indeed, begun to tell it you in a more playful mood. Know, then, that I am *settled* at Keswick, for an indefinite time, with no prospect of removing from it. Some plans of Coleridge made it necessary for me either to determine upon quitting this house at a given time, or upon remaining with it. The first I could not do, for want of means,—which is, in plain English, for want of money; so I determined upon the second; and it so happens that this topsy-turvy in ministry has made me well satisfied with my choice. Of course, my prospects are gone out with them,—hopes I will not call them, for I never thought enough of them to become hopes,—and, to confess the truth, like best to be left alone, and not put out of my way. Well, Wynn procured for me 'out of the fire', as he says, the offer of a place in the West Indies, worth £600 a year, which he refused for me, as there was no time for my answer. Instead, he has got me a pension of £200. (By the Lord, Senhora! you *shall* smile at *my* having a pension from the Treasury!) You may congratulate me, but not upon an accession of fortune; for the truth is, that hitherto I have received £160 a year from Wynn (which is all I have, except what I earn), and that now, of course, I shall receive this no longer, for

Wynn is not a rich man. But as his Majesty is pleased to give me £200, so is he graciously pleased to stop £56 out of it for fees and taxes, and eke, also, to pay it so irregularly, that, I am told, he who is only a quarter in arrears is in good luck. I am therefore a loser by the bounty of £16 a year during the war. When the income tax is taken off, I shall be £4 a gainer, but always have the inconvenience of uncertain remittances. I gain by it, inasmuch as I cease to receive any further obligations; though it would be absurd to say there was much pain in this, for in such cases I just take as I would give. Had Wynn his brother's fortune, or were he still a single man with his own, I should even have preferred receiving from him, rather than from the public; but, as it is, it is best as it is.

Accordingly, settled I am in this house; we are enclosing the garden, and planting currant trees and shrubs. The parlour is to be papered with cartridge paper, and the abominable curtains dyed of a chocolate brown, which will make them decent; they are making fringe for them. My room to have white curtains, a carpet, and all the books coming. ALL THE BOOKS! Think of that, Senhora! We wait only for fine weather to have the plasterers, and then the painters, and then our work begins. See, now, how useful you would be in the way of beautifying; and think how many a ragged regiment of books will stand in need of you. See, now, if it be possible for you to come, whether you can in your conscience refuse coming.

Mrs. Coleridge has gone to her husband's relations in Devonshire, and he meets her somewhere on the road. Your god-daughter talks of you every day; she is very unmanageable, and very amusing, and I like her well. My son is rather ailing just now, as we suppose, with his first teeth. He has had an eruption over his head for about three months, which is now wearing off. His eyes are as Tartarish as his sister's; I call him the little Mayortes and the Caōzinho, for

reasons which I and *Palmerin* will explain to you hereafter. He is a great tyrant; further I cannot say of him, except that he gives good proof of taste by pricking up his ears and brightening up his countenance when I begin to warble to him.

Jackson assists me in Reptonizing the garden with hearty satisfaction. We have a right-hand man, named Willy. When you come you shall hear the story of his three days' and nights' battle between him and his wife. He is a very odd fish, and talks to me about truth, and allegory, and fable, and the craziness of his wife at the full of the moon.

Write without delay, to say *how you are.* Edith's love. God bless you. R. S.

54. To Richard Duppa

May 23, 1807.

My dear Duppa,—Your book and your letter reached me at the same time. I have cut the leaves, collated the prints, and observe many valuable additions and some great typographical improvements. It was accompanied by a note from Mr. Murray of a very complimentary kind. I like to be complimented in my authorial character, and best of all by booksellers, because their good opinion gets purchasers, and so praise leads to pudding, which I consider to be the solid end of praise.

I have Walter Scott's promise to do what he can for M. Angelo in the *Edinburgh*, with this sort of salvo,—that Jeffrey is not a very practicable man, but he would do his best with him. My acquaintance with Scott is merely an *acquaintance*; but I had occasion *once* to write to him respecting the sale of a MS. entrusted to me, and bought by him for the Advocates' Library, and in that letter I introduced the subject. I was greatly in hopes, and indeed expected, that Wordsworth would have done as much in the *Critical*, by means of his brother, who writes there. Had it not been for this, I might perhaps

have done something by applying to Fellowes, the Anti-Calvinist, a very interesting man,—such a one, indeed, that, though I never met him but once, I could without scruple have written to him. Wonderful to tell, he bears a part in that *Review*, though his opinions are as opposite to *Hunt's*, and all his other steeple-hunting whippers-in, as light is to darkness. The hostile article I have not seen;—one of the advantages of living here is, that I never see these things till their season is over, and then, like wasps in winter, their power of stinging is at an end. I should have been angry at seeing your book abused when the abuse could do any hurt, and should have felt that sort of heat in my cheek which denotes the moral temperature of the minute to be above temperate. Now, whenever it falls in my way, which, very likely, never may be the case, it will come as a matter of literary history,—as what was said by some malevolent and ignorant person when a good book first appeared, and so it will furnish me an anecdote to relate when I speak of the book; or if I should ever live to old age, and have leisure to leave behind me that sort of transcript from recollections which would make such excellent materials for the literary history of my own times.

You are mistaken about Henry White; the fact is briefly this:—at the age of seventeen he published a little volume of poems of very great merit, and sent with them to the different Reviews, a letter stating that his hope was to raise money by them to pursue his studies and get to college. Hamilton, then of the *Critical*, showed me this letter. I asked him to let me review the book, which he promised; but he sent me no books after the promise. Well, the *M. Review* noticed this little volume in the most cruel and insulting manner. I was provoked, and wrote to encourage the boy, offering to aid him in a subscription for a costlier publication. I spoke of him in London, and had assurances of assistance from Sotheby, and, by way of Wynn, from Lord Carysfort. His second letter to me, however, said he was going

to Cambridge, under *Simeon's* protection. I plainly saw that the Evangelicals had caught him ; and as he did not want what little help I could have procured, and I had no leisure for new correspondences, ceased to write to him, but did him what good I could in the way of reviewing, and getting him friends at Cambridge. He died last autumn ; and I received a letter informing me of it. It gave me a sort of shock, because, in spite of his evangelicism, I always expected great things, from the proof he had given of very superior powers ; and, in replying to this letter, I asked if there were any intention of publishing anything which he might have left, and offered to give an opinion upon his papers, and look them over. Down came a box-full, the sight of which literally made my heart ache, and my eyes overflow, for never did I behold such proofs of human industry. To make short, I took the matter up with interest, collected his letters, and have, at the expense of more time than such a poor fellow as myself can very well afford, done what his family are very grateful for, and what I think the world will thank me for too. Of course I have done it gratuitously. His life will affect you, for he fairly died of intense application. Cambridge finished him. When his nerves were already so over-strained that his nights were utter misery, they gave him medicines to enable him to hold out during examination for a prize ! The horse won,—but he died after the race ! Among his letters there is a great deal of Methodism : if this procures for the book, as it very likely may, a sale among the righteous over-much, I shall rejoice for the sake of his family, for whom I am very much interested. I have, however, in justice to myself, stated, in the shortest and most decorous manner, that my own views of religion differ widely from his. Still, that I should become, and that, too, voluntarily, an editor of methodistical and Calvinistic letters, is a thing which, when I think of it, excites the same sort of smile that the thought of my pension does, and I wonder, like the sailor, what is to be done next.

Want of room has obliged me to reserve most of your letters, which I meant for the latter end of *Espriella's* remarks; but when I came to the latter end, the printing had got beyond my calculation of pages so much, that I was fain to stop. I have good hopes of such a sale as may induce my friend to travel again; my own stock of matter not being half exhausted, nor, indeed, my design half completed. The book ought to be published in a month. *Palmerin* will appear nearly at the same time, and, perhaps, tend to remove suspicion, if any should subsist. The reception of this book will determine whether it is to be followed up or not, but if it be, be assured that you shall have ample revenge upon Fuseli.

I know nothing of botany, and every day regret that I do not. It is a settled purpose of my heart, if my children live, to make them good naturalists. If you come either into Yorkshire or Northumberland, you must not return to the south without touching at Greta Hall, and seeing me in my glory. We have papered the parlour this very day. It is not so fine a room as yours, Mr. Duppa, but it is very beautiful, I assure you,—and the masons are at this time making a ceiling to my study,—and I have got curtains for it, the colour of nankeen,—and there is to be a carpet, and a new fender, and all sorts of things that are proper. Miss Barker tells me she has seen you. I am in good hope of persuading her to come down this summer; and if she comes, she shall not go till I have a set of drawings for the parlour.

I want to hear, in spite of great trouble and little profit, that you have fixed upon a new subject, and are again at work. There is no being happy without having some worthy occupation in hand.

Farewell! R. S.

55. To G. C. Bedford

Keswick, Oct. 4, 1807.

My dear Grosvenor,—Ever since the arrival of Harry's letter I have been in great uneasiness concern-

ing you, for, by the same post, Wynn told me he supposed you were by that time here. This evening your letter from Acton has brought the first intelligence of you, which has been delayed some days by a blunder of the post in carrying it to Birmingham. Now that you are in London, and the shock of meeting is over, I am glad you are there. Had you come on, I should have endeavoured to detain you as long as possible.

What shall I say to you ? This is the first heavy loss which you have ever experienced ; hereafter the bitterness of the cup will have passed away, and you will then perceive its wholesomeness. This world is all to us till we suffer some such loss, and every such loss is a transfer of so much of our hearts and hopes to the next ; and they who live long enough to see most of their friends go before them feel that they have more to recover by death than to lose by it. This is not the mere speculation of a mind at ease. Almost all who were about me in my childhood have been removed. I have brothers, sisters, friends, father, mother, and child, in another state of existence, and assuredly I regard death with very different feelings than I should have done if none of my affections were fixed beyond the grave. To dwell upon the circumstances which in this case lessen the evil of separation would be idle ; at present you acknowledge, and in time you will feel them.

Pray let me hear from you. I am very anxious about your own state of health. Remember me to Harry, and to your father and mother, as one who has too often and too long been a guest in their house, not to be deeply impressed by any loss which befalls it. God bless you, my dear Grosvenor.—Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

56. To WALTER SCOTT

Keswick, Dec. 8, 1807.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—I am very much obliged to you for the offer which you make concerning the *Edinburgh Review*, and fully sensible of your friendliness, and the

advantages which it holds out. I bear as little ill will to Jeffrey as he does to me, and attribute whatever civil things he has said of me to especial civility, whatever pert ones (a truer epithet than severe would be) to the habit which he has acquired of taking it for granted that the critic is, by virtue of his office, superior to every writer whom he chooses to summon before him. The reviewals of *Thalaba* and *Madoc* do in no degree influence me. Setting all personal feelings aside, the objections which weigh with me against bearing any part in this journal are these :—I have scarcely one opinion in common with it upon any subject. Jeffrey is for peace, and is endeavouring to frighten the people into it: I am for war as long as Bonaparte lives. He is for Catholic emancipation: I believe that its immediate consequence would be to introduce an Irish priest into every ship in the navy. My feelings are still less in unison with him than my opinions. On subjects of moral or political importance no man is more apt to speak in the very gall of bitterness than I am, and this habit is likely to go with me to the grave: but that sort of bitterness in which he indulges, which tends directly to wound a man in his feelings, and injure him in his fame and fortune (Montgomery is a case in point), appears to me utterly inexcusable. Now, though there would be no necessity that I should follow this example, yet every separate article in the *Review* derives authority from the merit of all the others; and, in this way, whatever of any merit I might insert there would aid and abet opinions hostile to my own, and thus identify me with a system which I thoroughly disapprove. This is not said hastily. The emolument to be derived from writing at ten guineas a sheet, Scotch measure, instead of seven pounds, Annual, would be considerable; the pecuniary advantage resulting from the different manner in which my future works would be handled, probably still more so. But my moral feelings must not be compromised. To Jeffrey as an individual I shall ever be ready to show every kind of individual courtesy; but of Judge Jeffrey of the

Edinburgh Review I must ever think and speak as of a bad politician, a worse moralist, and a critic, in matters of taste, equally incompetent and unjust.

Your letter was delayed a week upon the road by the snow. I wish it had been written sooner, and had travelled faster, or that I had communicated to you my own long-projected edition of *Morte d'Arthur*. I am sorry to have forestalled you, and you are the only person whom I should be sorry to forestall in this case, because you are the only person who could do it certainly as well, and perhaps better, with less labour than myself. My plan is to give the whole bibliology of the Round Table in the preliminaries, and indicate the source of every chapter in the notes.

The reviewal of Wordsworth I am not likely to see, the *Edinburgh* very rarely lying in my way. My own notions respecting the book agree in the main with yours, though I may probably go a step farther than you in admiration. There are certainly some pieces there which are good for nothing (none, however, which a bad poet could have written), and very many which it was highly injudicious to publish. That song to Lord Clifford, which you particularize, is truly a noble poem. The 'Ode upon Pre-existence' is a dark subject darkly handled. Coleridge is the only man who could make such a subject luminous. 'The Leech-gatherer' is one of my favourites; there he has caught Spenser's manner, and, in many of the better poemets, has equally caught the best manner of old Wither, who, with all his long fits of dullness and prosing, had the heart and soul of a poet in him. The sonnets are in a grand style. I only wish Dundee had not been mentioned. James Grahame and I always call that man Claverhouse, the name by which the devils know him below.

Marmion is expected as impatiently by me as he is by ten thousand others. Believe me, Scott, no man of real genius was ever yet a puritanical stickler for correctness, or fastidious about any faults except his own. The best artists, both in poetry and painting,

have produced the most. Give me more lays, and correct them at leisure for after editions—not laboriously, but when the amendment comes naturally and unsought for. It never does to sit down doggedly to correct.

The *Cid* is about half through the press, and will not disappoint you. It is much in the language of *Amadis*, both books having been written before men began to think of a fine style. This is one cause why *Amadis* is so far superior to *Palmerin*. There are passages of a poet's feeling in the *Cid*, and some of the finest circumstances of chivalry. I expect much credit from this work.

To recur to the *Edinburgh Review*, let me once more assure you that, if I do not grievously deceive myself, the criticisms upon my own poems have not influenced me; for, however unjust they were, they were less so, and far less uncourteous, than what I meet with in other journals; and, though these things injure me materially in a pecuniary point of view, they make no more impression upon me than the bite of a sucking flea would do upon Gargantua. The business of reviewing, much as I have done in it myself, I disapprove of, but, most of all, when it is carried on upon such a system as Jeffrey's. The judge is criminal who acquits the guilty, but he is far more so who condemns the innocent. In the *Annual* I have only one coadjutor, all the other writers being below contempt. In the *Edinburgh* I should have had many with whom I should have felt it creditable to myself to have been associated, if the irreconcilable difference which there is between Jeffrey and myself upon every great principle of taste, morality, and policy, did not occasion an irremovable difficulty. Meantime, I am as sincerely obliged to you as if this difference did not exist, and I could have availed myself of all its advantages, to the importance of which I am fully sensible.

I am very curious for your *Life of Dryden*, that I may see how far your estimate of his merits agrees

with my own. In the way of editing we want the yet unpublished metrical romances from the Auchinleck MS., of which you have just given such an account as to whet the public curiosity, and a collection of the Scotch poets. K. James, who is the best, has not been well edited; Blind Harry but badly; Dunbar, and many others, are not to be procured. Your name would make such a speculation answer, however extensive the collection might be. I beg my respects to Mrs. Scott, and am,—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

57. To JOSEPH COTTLE

Greta Hall, April 20, 1808.

MY DEAR COTTLE,—On opening a box to-day, the contents of which I had not seen since the winter of 1799, your picture made its appearance. Of all Robert Hancock's performances it is infinitely the best. I cannot conceive a happier likeness. I have been thinking of you and of old times ever since it came to light. I have been reading your *Fall of Cambria*, and in the little interval that remains before supper must talk to you in reply to your letter.

What you say of my copyrights affected me very much. Dear Cottle, set your heart at rest on that subject. It ought to be at rest. These were yours, fairly bought, and fairly sold. You bought them on the chance of their success, which no London bookseller would have done; and had they not been bought, they could not have been published at all. Nay, if you had not purchased *Joan of Arc*, the poem never would have existed, nor should I, in all probability, ever have obtained that reputation which is the capital on which I subsist, nor that power which enables me to support it.

But this is not all. Do you suppose, Cottle, that I have forgotten those true and most essential acts of friendship which you showed me when I stood most in need of them? Your house was my house

when I had no other. The very money with which I bought my wedding-ring and paid my marriage fees, was supplied by you. It was with your sisters I left Edith during my six months' absence, and for the six months' after my return it was from you that I received, week by week, the little on which we lived, till I was enabled to live by other means. It is not the settling of a cash account that can cancel obligations like these. You are in the habit of preserving your letters, and, if you were not, I would entreat you to preserve *this*, that it might be seen hereafter. Sure I am, there never was a more generous or a kinder heart than yours; and you will believe me when I add, that there does not live that man upon earth whom I remember with more gratitude and more affection. My head throbs and my eyes burn with these recollections. Good night! my dear old friend and benefactor. R. S.

58. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, April 26, 1808.

Dear Grosvenor,—From one scene of confusion to another. You saw me in London everlastingly at work in packing my books; and here they are now lying in all parts about me, up to my knees in one place, up to my eyes in another, and above head and ears in a third. I can scarcely find stepping places through the labyrinth, from one end of the room to the other. Like Pharaoh's frogs, they have found their way everywhere, even into the bedchambers. And now, Grosvenor, having been married above twelve years, I have for the first time collected all my books together. What a satisfaction this is you cannot imagine, for you cannot conceive the hundreth part of the inconvenience and vexation I have endured for want of them. But the joy which they give me brings with it a mingled feeling,—the recollection that there are as many materials heaped up as I shall ever find life to make use of; and the humiliating reflection how little knowledge can be acquired in the most laborious life of man, that know-

ledge becoming every age less and less, in proportion to the accumulation of events. For some things I have been born too late. Under the last reign, for instance, as in the first half of this, my pension would have been an income adequate to my wants, and my profits as a writer would have been at least quadrupled. On the other hand, bad as these times are, they are better than those which are coming.

At Bristol I met with the man of all others whom I was most desirous of meeting,—the only man living of whose praise I was ambitious, or whose censure would have humbled me. You will be curious to know who this could be. Savage Landor, the author of *Gebir*, a poem which, unless you have heard me speak of it, you have probably never heard of at all. I never saw any one more unlike myself in every prominent part of human character, nor any one who so cordially and instinctively agreed with me on so many of the most important subjects. I have often said before we met, that I would walk forty miles to see him, and having seen him, I would gladly walk fourscore to see him again. He talked of *Thalaba*, and I told him of the series of mythological poems which I had planned,—mentioned some of the leading incidents on which they were to have been formed, and also told him for what reason they were laid aside; —in plain English, that I could not afford to write them. Landor's reply was, 'Go on with them, and I will pay for printing them, as many as you will write and as many copies as you please.' I had reconciled myself to my abdication (if the phrase may be allowable), and am not sure that this princely offer has not done me mischief; for it has awakened in me old dreams and hopes which had been laid aside, and a stinging desire to go on, for the sake of showing him poem after poem, and saying, 'I need not accept your offer, but I have done this because you made it.' It is something to be praised by one's peers; ordinary praise I regard as little as ordinary abuse. God bless you!

R. S.

59. To Charles Danvers, Bristol

Keswick, May 5, 1808.

My dear Danvers,—Of our journey homeward, safe arrival, and finding all well, and as it should be, you have heard from Tom. Since he wrote I have been in a state of happy confusion, occasioned by the arrival of my books, two-and-twenty packages. Here they are at last, after so many years that I have been wanting them, wishing for them, and yet never able to get them together; here they are gathered together under one roof. It was only yesterday that we got them stowed away. I have had a range of shelves run up along one side of the passage which connects the two houses from the floor to the ceiling. It holds about 1,350 volumes, and is denominated Duck Row, though there is only the dark end to which that name can properly be applied, those which are in the light being Drakes. There must be yet a small stand of shelves on the upper landing-place to hold about 200 which are still kicking to windward, and to receive droppers-in. I have seven stands upon brackets in my study, which support the parchmentarians, and the carpenter is making three more to go over the three doors in the passage; that is, the study door, our own bedroom, and that wherein you slept. Heartily do we wish you were coming to us this summer; you would delight to see me in my glory, with all my riches around me. My son walks barefoot, and will, I think, tread evenly enough on his feet; the want of shoes will be some inconvenience, but that cannot be helped. He is a beautiful boy, terribly violent, and almost unmanageable. All this he will outgrow, if it please God that he lives. I am in great favour with him, and when he and I have the book of the birds or beasts before us, I teaching him the language of all, and he repeating them after me, I verily believe such a concert hath not been heard since Noah and his live-stock came out of the ark. What you hear at Exeter Change is nothing to it! Emma is the quietest of in-

fants ; there is scarcely any trouble with her ; an agreeable variety this, from all her predecessors. She will be like neither brother nor sister, for her eyes are dark grey. I hear her voice so seldom, and see so little of her (our nurse not having yet been called away) that I hardly think of her as one of the family, and forget her existence till she makes her appearance.

Tom suffered little inconvenience on the journey, still I believe he will have reason to repent his obstinacy in running away from King so soon. I hope King has received the book ; if it be not yet come, it will soon.

I hope also and trust that by this time King has perceived the villany of that portrait, and thrown it behind the fire. It looks like a sneaking sawneying Methodist parson,—the one thing in the world most unlike me.

Tom copied out for me all that is fairly written of *Kehama*, and I have sent it to Landor. The offer which he made me deserved this on my part, and if anything were to induce me to finish the poem, it would be because such an offer had been made me by such a man, though of course it is what I should not accept. If he likes it, I shall make an effort to go through the story, by writing before breakfast, as I did at Westbury and at your house ; and see when it is finished whether there be any possibility of securing the fair price of so much labour, either by subscription or sale of copyright.

Our fair weather began on May Day, exactly as it did four years ago, when Edith was born ; we are obliged to leave off fires, though a week ago we were creeping into them. The boat is launched, and we have begun our summer cruises on the Lake. Herbert went on the water yesterday for the first time, and was not a little delighted with the stroke of the oars, but he found out another amusement which was not quite so well, that of throwing things overboard. One of his stockings went, and it required good watching to save his leathern cap from following it.

Harry has had his first fee,—a two-guinea one. He pronounced the patient to be at that time dying, and die she did in two hours; so the doctor lost his patient, but lost no credit. I suppose the parcel from Bristol will soon make its appearance. Remember us to all friends, and in particular say to Mr. Heinker that it will give me great pleasure to show him everything within reach of Keswick, when he comes this way. God bless you.—Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

60. To WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

May 20, 1808.

You have bound me to the completion of *Kehama*, and, if I have health and eyesight, completed it will be within twelve months. Want of practice has not weakened me: I have ascertained this, and am proceeding.

I will use such materials as have stood the test; those materials are the same in all languages, and we know what they are. With respect to metre it is otherwise: there we must look to English only, and in English we have no other great poem than the *Paradise Lost*. Blank verse has long appeared to me the noblest measure of which our language is capable, but it would not suit *Kehama*. There must be quicker, wilder movements; there must be a gorgeousness of ornament also,—eastern gem-work, and sometimes rhyme must be rattled upon rhyme, till the reader is half dizzy with the thundering echo. My motto must be,—

Ποικίλον εἶδος ἔχων, ὅτι ποικίλον ὕμνον ἀφάσσω.

This is not from any ambition of novelty, but from the nature and necessity of the subject. I am well aware that novelty in such things is an obstacle to success; *Thalaba* has proved it to be so. The mass of mankind hate innovation: they hate to unlearn what they have learnt wrong, and they hate to confess

their ignorance by submitting to learn anything right. I would tread in the beaten road rather than get among thorns by turning out of it; but the beaten road will not take me where I want to go. What seems best to be done is this, to write mostly in rhyme, to slip into it rather than out of it, and then generally into some metre so strongly marked, as to leave the ear fully satisfied.

One inference I think must be drawn from the obscurity of Pindar's metre,—that, be it what it may, the pleasure which it gave did not result from rhythm. Indeed, the whole system of classical metres seems to have been that of creating difficulty for the sake of overcoming it. We misread Sapphics without making them worse; we misread Pentameters and make them better; and the Hexameter remains the most perceptible of all measures, though in our pronunciation we generally distort four feet out of the six.

A great deal more may be done with rhyme than has yet been done with it; there is a crypto-rhyme which may often be introduced with excellent effect; the eye has nothing to do with it, but the ear feels it without, perhaps, perceiving anything more than the general harmony, and not knowing how that harmony is produced. Sometimes the sparing intermixture of rhymes in a paragraph may be so managed as to satisfy the ear, and give greater effect to their after profusion. These are not things which one thinks of in composition, but they are thought of in correcting; they are the touches in finishing off, when a little alteration produces a great difference.

Your dislike to the ballad metre is, perhaps, because you are sick of a tune which has been sung so often and so badly. It is not incapable of dignity, but there is a sort of language that usually goes with it, and has the effect of making it so. *Kehama* is pitched in too high a key for it; I shall weed out all uncouth lines, and leave the public nothing to abuse except the strangeness of the fable, which you may be sure

will be plentifully abused. The mythology explains itself as it is introduced; yet because the names are not familiar, people will fancy there is a difficulty in understanding it. Sir William Jones has done nothing in introducing it so coldly and formally as he has done. They who read his poems do not remember them, and none but those who have read them can be expected to have even heard of my Divinities. But for popularity I care only as regards profit, and for profit only as regards subsistence. The praise of ten would have contented you; often have I said that you did not underrate the number of men whose praise was truly desirable. Ten thousand persons will read my book; if five hundred will promise to buy it, I shall be secure of all I want. You shall have it in large portions as fast it is written.—Yours, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

61. To NEVILLE WHITE

Keswick, June 20, 1808.

MY DEAR NEVILLE,—The box arrived about an hour ago. Sir William Jones's works are placed opposite my usual seat, and on the most conspicuous shelf in the room. I have retired to my library to thank you for the most splendid set of books it contains. I thank you for them, Neville, truly and heartily; but do not let it hurt you if I say, that so costly a present gives me some pain as well as pleasure. Were you a rich man, you could not give me more books than I would joyfully accept, for I delight in accumulating such treasures as much as a miser does in heaping together gold; but, as things are at present, no proof was needed of your generous spirit, and, from the little you have to spare, I cannot but feel you are giving me too much. You will not be offended at my expressing this feeling, nor will you impute it to any unjust pride, which, blessed be God, I am too poor a man, and too wise a one, to be guilty of in any, even the smallest, degree. Be assured that I shall ever value the books far more than if they

had come from a wealthier donor, and that I write the doner's name in them with true respect and esteem. You will be pleased to hear they are books of immediate use to me. Seven years ago I began a long poem which Sir William Jones, had he been living, would have liked to see, because it has the system of Hindoo mythology for its basis. I believe you heard me mention it at Mr. Hill's. I have been stimulated by the approbation of one of the few men living whose approbation could stimulate me, to go on with this poem, and am winning time for it by rising earlier than was my custom, because I will not allow any other part of the day to an employment less important that writing history, and far less profitable than that of writing anything else, how humble or how worthless soever. In the hours thus fairly won for the purpose I get on steadily and well. Now, though I had long ago gone through those works of Sir William, and made from them such extracts as were necessary for my purpose, it was still very desirable that I should have them at hand. Lord Teignmouth's *Life* also is new to me.

I have not seen the Scotch review of *Marmion*, but I have heard that on its appearance, Walter Scott showed Jeffrey the letter in which I had refused to bear a part in his review. I do not know whether Scott may have shown him another letter in which I spoke of the *Remains*. Scott may perhaps review them himself, unless this affair of *Marmion*, or, what is more likely, their utter and irreconcilable difference of political opinion, should make him withdraw from the journal altogether.

Henceforward we shall have little business to write about. You may supply the place by telling me of what you read, and I may sometimes be able to direct you to books which will supply further, or perhaps better, information upon the subjects which interest you: and sometimes save you time in acquiring knowledge, by telling you the shortest and nearest road to it. God bless you! R. SOUTHEY.

62. To John May

Keswick, June 29, 1808.

My dear Friend,—Your letter from Oxford gave me great pleasure. I had been anxiously expecting to hear what news you had of Worthington, and you have sent me the best that could be. That general and permanent good will arise out of partial and transitory evil, is your faith as well as mine ; and it is by no means impossible that, in your own particular case, you may ultimately be the richer for your hopes. There is no country in the world which is at this time so likely to be prosperous as Brazil. It is out of the reach of France as long as England can keep the seas ; it has no pestilence to keep down its progress like North America, and is in less danger of intestine commotions than the United States. I have no great respect for the Braganzas —the first of the family was a villain, and, with the single exception of Joam IV, they who have sat upon the throne have been either very weak princes, or, in the case of Pedro II, very wicked. But, except Pedro, there has been nothing abominable among them ; and, in the present state of things, Prince Joam rises above his contemporary princes, as having some sense of honour, and, I verily believe, a conscientious desire to do the best he can. A more liberal system of policy was gaining ground, and circumstances must now necessarily assist it. There will be a great and increasing harvest for English enterprise. I hope you will have your full share of it.

Since the stirring day of the French Revolution I have never felt half so much excitement in political events as the present state of Spain has given me. I had often said that if Europe was to be delivered in our days, in no country was its deliverance so likely to begin as in Spain ; and this opinion, if my recollections do not play me false, you will find expressed in the review of Semple's *Travels*, written eight or ten months ago. There was then a millstone about the

neck of Spain; nothing could be done under such a government, and now that obstacle is removed. The dynasty is *felo de se*, and if the Spaniards would bury the crown and sceptre which they have left at four cross roads, little as I like to move from home, I think I would gird up my loins and go to assist at the ceremony as devoutly as ever pilgrim put cockle-shell in his hat, and set off for Compostella. Spain is without a government; there never was a country whose situation so plainly pointed out what government would suit it best.

On every account it is desirable that the whole peninsula should be united; on many accounts it is equally desirable that, in their internal governments, the several kingdoms should be kept distinct. A federal republic would accomplish both objects, and would remove the main difficulty which stands in the way of a union with Portugal. Arragon, Biscay, &c., would retain their own *fueros*,—each province have its own Cortes, and the General Assembly might be held at Madrid,

The Spaniards have to deliver their country first. I hope and believe that they will deliver it. I never had any hope from the old confederacies of Austria, Russia, &c. I never could have any from the old governments of the continent; their hour is come, and we have only to regret that it did not come sooner. Nothing but a spirit of liberty and of patriotism can check the power of France. That spirit has arisen, and in a country where it cannot easily be checked or overpowered. Biscay, Asturias, and Galicia, have a population which contains above 400,000 men between the ages of sixteen and fifty, and there is, probably, not a peasant among them who is not a good marksman. The remembrance that they have once before recovered their country will assist them not a little in recovering it again: if the flame be not speedily put out, it must spread; and I heartily pray that the French who have made Lisbon the wretched place it is, may soon find their graves there. If once the tide turns against them,

we shall witness such a vengeance as the world has never exhibited before.

I have been sadly impeded in my pursuits,—first, by a bilious fever among the children, which endangered little Herbert, and latterly, by one of my violent catarrhs, which clings to me, and afflicts my eyes, so that I spend half the day in the darkest place I can find. Still I get on a little, and in the intervals of these interruptions have got on considerably. My last notes to the *Cid* are completed, and go off to-morrow: in about a month I hope you will receive the volume. Next week I shall send off to my uncle the first seven chapters of my *Brazil*, containing about two-fifths of a volume. I have as much more ready for transcription. For my volume of *Travels*, or rather *Letters*, I have been collecting stray materials into one drawer, and my order of the evening is to begin this as soon as your letter is dispatched. I am not certain whether or not I told you in my last that I had adopted a system of earlier rising than usual, and thus won a good hour before breakfast, which, being thus created for the purpose, may allowably be given to poetry. In those hours, and those only, I have gone on with my Hindoo poem, which was begun at Lisbon, and has lain dormant for many years. Great part of it will be in irregular rhymes, of a higher pitch than Walter Scott's; for mine is a lofty subject, which takes in all worlds of a wild mythology. This is not all: it is my nature to do two things at a time better than one; or rather, it is my belief that time is saved by doing it; because a train of thought may be ready for use, when it would be necessary to wait for them before the other could proceed. I am, therefore, planning another heroic poem, to be begun forthwith, and prosecuted on those mornings when I am not ready with the immediate matter for *Kehama*. Pelayo is my hero, the Restorer of Spain—a subject which has long been in my mind, and which I have at last chosen before that of the Battle of Albubarrote, giving it precedence rather than preference. Considering that the first edition of *Thalaba*

is lying in the warehouse, and that my whole profits upon it have amounted to five-and-twenty pounds, this is having good heart. But I cast my bread upon the waters, and, if I myself should not live to find it after many days, my children will.

Tom left us last week—summoned by an unsolicited appointment, which happens to be a good one. It is to the *Dreadnought*, a ninety-eight, Admiral Sotheby's ship. I know his brother, the poet, and am on very courteous terms with him,—so much so, that if this Admiral can be of any service to Tom, I think Sotheby would take some pains to influence him in his behalf.

Remember me respectfully to you mother. I have a longing recollection of the *Hale* strong beer, and shall never see the abominable malt-physic of this country without thinking of it. Mrs. T. May was in poor health when I saw her; is she recovered? It vexes me that you and Mrs. May should be so far on the road as Derby, and yet not near enough. God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

63. To LIEUTENANT SOUTHEY, H.M.S. 'DREADNOUGHT'

Aug. 16, 1808.

MY DEAR TOM,— —— is gone to Spain! to fight as a private in the Spanish army, and he has found two Englishmen to go with him. A noble fellow! This is something like the days of old, as we poets and romancers represent them;—something like the best part of chivalry: old honours, old generosity, old heroism, are reviving, and the cancer of that nation is stopped, I believe and fully trust, now and for ever. A man like —— cannot long remain without command; and, of all things in this world, I should most rejoice to hear that King Joseph had fallen into his hands;—he would infallibly hang him on the nearest tree, first, as a Bonaparte by blood; secondly, as a Frenchman by adoption; thirdly, as a king by trade.

Miss Seward's criticism has appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Her verses have not been inserted

in the *Courier*, which is rather odd. She reads *Madoc* to all her acquaintance, and must be the means of selling several copies.

Another island came up on Saturday last, which I shall visit the first fine day,—probably with Jackson and Jonathan Ottley, who is going to measure it and catch a bottle of the gas, Jonathan being, as you know, our Keswick philosopher. We are now having a spell of wind and rain.

We have got the prettiest kitten you ever saw, —a dark tabby,—and we have christened her by the heathenish name of Dido. You would be very much diverted to see her hunt Herbert all round the kitchen, playing with his little bare feet, which she just pricks at every pat, and the faster he moves back the more she paws them, at which he cries 'Naughty Dido!' and points to his feet and says, 'Hurt, hurt, naughty Dido.' Presently he feeds her with comfits, which Dido plays with awhile, but soon returns to her old game. You have lost the amusing part of Herbert's childhood,—just when he is trying to talk, and endeavouring to say everything.

I have been in the water very seldom since you went; but the last time I accomplished the great job of fairly swimming on my back, which is a step equal to that of getting one's first commission.

I hope that the opening of *Pelayo* is pretty well arranged, but I will not begin upon it till I come to a stop in *Kehama*. You will not, perhaps, be surprised to hear that two of my old dreams are likely to be introduced, with powerful effect, in this poem, —good proof that it was worth while to keep even the imperfect register that I have. The fear is, that what happened to Nebuchadnezzar is perpetually happening to me. I forget my dreams, and have no Daniel to help out my recollection; and if by chance I do remember them, unless they are instantly written down, the impression passes away almost as lightly as the dream itself. Do you remember the story of Mickle the poet, who always regretted that he could

not remember the poetry which he composed in his sleep? it was, he said, so infinitely superior to anything which he produced in his waking hours. One morning he awoke and repeated the lamentation over his unhappy fortune, that he should compose such sublime poetry, and yet lose it for ever! 'What!' said his wife, who happened to be awake, 'were you writing poetry?' 'Yes,' he replied, 'and such poetry that I would give the world to remember it.' 'Well then,' said she, 'I did luckily hear the last lines, and I am sure I remember them exactly: they were—

> By Heaven, I'll wreak my woes
> Upon the cowslip and the pale primrose.

This is one of Sharpe's stories,—it is true, and an excellently good one it is. I am not such a dreamer as Mickle, for what I can remember is worth remembering, —and one of the wildest scenes in *Kehama* will prove this. God bless you! R. S.

64. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Nov. 9, 1808.

My dear Grosvenor,—I am ready, desirous, and able to bear a part in this said Review. You will, however, think it odd, that the very subject on which you think me most able, is one which I should rather avoid. I have not the sort of talent requisite for writing a political pamphlet upon the state of Spain; these things require a kind of wire-drawing which I have never learnt to perform, and a method of logical reasoning to which my mind has never been habituated, and for which it has no natural aptitude. What I feel about Spain you know; what I think about it is this,—the country has much to suffer, in all probability there will be many and dreadful defeats of the patriots, and such scenes as have never been witnessed in Europe since the destruction of Saguntum and Numantia may perhaps be renewed there. Joseph will very likely be crowned at Madrid, and many of

us may give up the cause of Spanish independence as lost. But so surely as God liveth, and as the spirit of God liveth and moveth in the hearts of men, so surely will that country eventually work out its own redemption.

Now Grosvenor, understand me clearly. I could not fill half a score of pages by dilating and diluting this—that is, I should be a sorry pamphleteer; but I believe myself to be a good reviewer in my own way, which is that of giving a succinct account of the contents of the book before me, extracting its essence, bringing my own knowledge to bear upon the subject, and, where occasion serves, seasoning it with those opinions which in some degree leaven all my thoughts, words, and actions. If you had read the *Annual Reviews*, you would comprehend this better by example than I can make you in a letter. Voyages and travels I review better than anything else, being well read in that branch of literature; better, indeed, than most men. Biography and history are within my reach; upon any of these topics I will do my best. You know my way of thinking upon most subjects. I despise all parties too much to be attached to any. I believe that this country must continue the war while Bonaparte is at the head of France, and while the system which he has perfected remains in force; I therefore, from my heart and soul, execrate and abominate the peacemongers. I am an enemy to any further concessions to the Catholics; I am a friend to the Church establishment. I wish for reform, because I cannot but see that all things are tending towards revolution, and nothing but reform can by any possibility prevent it.

Thus much is said to you that it may be said through you. To yourself I add that the pay proposed will be exceedingly suitable to my poor finances, and that the more books of travels they send me the better. I had almost forgotten to say, that if a fit text be sent me, the subject of converting the Hindoos is one upon which I am well prepared. Farewell, and God bless you!

R. S.

65. To Lieutenant Southey, H.M.S. 'Dreadnought'

Keswick, Nov. 12, 1808.

My dear Tom,—The intelligence which I have to communicate will surprise you, if you have not already heard it from some other quarter. My uncle is married. The Imperial Colonel told me this was to be the case some eight or nine weeks ago, adding that he had seen the lady; but there are so many Hills in the world that I utterly disbelieved his reported rumours. Married, however, he is, to the fourth daughter of Lovelace Bigg Wither, a gentleman of great weight in the county of Hampshire, and of the very ancient and good family of my old friend George Wither, the poet. It seems, however, that he must have taken the name for an estate, for his daughter's name was Bigg. Of her age, or of anything else, I know nothing, except that she hopes to see Edith and me when we visit 'the more civilized parts of England'. Is not this *eempraunce* in anybody who lives by the Black Mountains, to call Skiddaw uncivilized?

I am heartily glad of this, for it frequently made me uneasy to think how solitary the remainder of my uncle's life was likely to be. He has none of those inveterate habits which often render marriages uncomfortable; all his habits have been plucked up by the roots, and he had new ones to acquire. The evil is, that if he should have children there is no hope of his living to see them grow up. That, however, is a remote evil. There will be enough for their education, and if I am living there will be somebody to superintend it. Cousin Robert will not do for a playfellow when the age of riding *pocko* is over, but he will do for something better.

And so, Tom, we have got another aunt, by the Lord! How will this be relished in the College Green? I am very curious to see this new relation, with whom, in case of a family, it is likely that one day I must be so nearly concerned. My uncle may be trusted for

choosing well. Aunt I shall not call her, being too old to consider her as such. It seems more as if a brother had married, than a kinsman of another generation.

And now, after this Gazette Extraordinary, comes the flat part of the newspaper, filled up how it can. It is time that another letter should arrive from you, and I am daily looking for it. Ten proofs of *Thalaba* have reached me, the notes are in a very beautiful type, and this edition will greatly excel the former in its appearance. Kehama is just now in great glory. He has won the Swerga, and Kalyal is riding abroad in the huge chariot of Jaggernaut, as the Idol's Bride. I have got on to 2,500 lines, probably half the poem.

A few days ago came a letter from Bedford, communicating to me the, as yet secret, intelligence that it is thought expedient to set on foot a Review, for the purpose of counteracting the base and cowardly politics of the *Edinburgh*. Walter Scott, it seems, was the suggestor, to some of the men in power. Gifford (the Baviad and Massinger Gifford) is to be editor, and he commissioned Bedford to apply to me. The pay will be as high as the *Edinburgh*, and such political information as is necessary will be communicated from official sources,—for, in plain English, the ministers set it up. But they wish it not to wear a party appearance,—only to breathe at this time the right English *at-him-Trojan* spirit. Would I write about Spain, was asked? I have asked in return if they can bear to have the principle avowed of no peace while Bonaparte lives, and if I may damn Sir Hew Dalrymple,—*sine qua nons* upon this subject with me; and I have offered to take those departments for which I conceive myself sufficiently qualified. Next week will probably bring me tidings how this is settled, and by the time these *Annuals* are off my hands, a parcel on the new account may be expected to arrive. They require no pledge to any party or any set of opinions. I have taken care that there shall be no mistake about mine, explicitly informing Gifford that I am an enemy to the peace-mongers, an enemy to Catholic Emancipation, a friend

to the Church Establishment, because I am a heretic requiring toleration, an almost Quaker,—a damner of Sir Hew Dalrymple and Co., and a friend to reform, as being the only thing which can prevent revolution. All fair and above board. The articles which are in fashion will most likely weigh down those that are not. But is it not amusing that such an application should be made to me from such a quarter?

Little Mr. De Quincey is at Grasmere. He was here last week, and is coming again. I wish he was not so little, and I wish he would not leave his great-coat always behind upon the road. But he is a very able man, with a head brimful of information.

Nothing can be done in the way of a county meeting against Lord Lonsdale. Wordsworth, therefore, is now writing a pamphlet about the Convention, which doubtless will do your heart good. Curwen called here the day after we met him at Calvert's, pressing me to visit him at Workington. If I go, it will be with Wordsworth, for the sake of tracing the Derwent the whole way. God bless you. R. S.

66. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Dec. 20, 1808.

My dear Grosvenor,—Here is my vindication of the Indian Mission packed up on the table; but, unluckily, too late for to-day's coach, so it cannot reach London before Monday. It is written with hearty goodwill, and requires no signature to show whence it comes. Now I wish you would ask Mr. Gifford—if he thinks it expedient to use the pruning-knife—to let the copy be returned to me when the printer has done with it, because it is ten to one that the passages which he would curtail—being the most Robert Southeyish of the whole—would be those that I should like best myself; and, therefore, I would have the satisfaction of putting them in again for my own satisfaction, if for nobody's else. I must still confess to you, Grosvenor, that I have my fears and

suspicions as to the freedom of the Review, and this article will, in some measure, put it to the proof: for it is my nature and my principle to speak and write as earnestly, as plainly, and as straight to the mark as I think and feel. If the editor understands his own interest, he will not restrict me. A Review started against the *Edinburgh* will instantly be suspected of being a ministerial business, and a sprinkling of my free and fearless way of thinking will win friends for it among those very persons most likely to be prejudiced against it, and to be misled by the Scotchmen. The high orthodox men, both of Church and State, will always think as they are told: there is no policy in writing to them; the *Anti-Jacobin* and *British Critic* are good enough for their faces of brass, brains of lead, and tongues of bell-metal. I shall not offend them, though my reasonings appeal to better hearts and clearer understandings. I would say this to him if I knew him; but I do not desire you to say it, because I do not know how far it might suit the person to whom it relates.

Spain! Spain! were the resources of the nation at my command, I would stake my head upon the deliverance of that country, and the utter overthrow of Bonaparte. But, good God! what blunders, what girlish panics, what absolute cowardice are there in our measures! Disembarking troops when we ought to be sending ship after ship as fast as they could be put on board. It is madness to wait for transports; send ships of the line, and let them run singly for Lisbon, and Cadiz, and Catalonia. Nothing can ruin the Spaniards, unless they feel the misconduct of England as I am grieved to say I feel it. It is the more heart-breaking because the heart of England is with those noble people. We are not only ready, willing, and able to make every effort for them, but even eager to do it; and yet all is palsied by plans so idiotic that the horse-whip were a fitter instrument of punishment for them than the halter, if it were not for their deadly consequences. God bless you! R. S.

67. To John Rickman

Keswick, Jan. 18, 1809.

My dear Rickman,—Parliament being so soon to assemble,—to the great benefit of franking, and spoiling of newspapers, I suppose that the Emperor of the Franks may by this be arrived at Westminster, and that letters may once more travel free as thought,—though not quite so fast. George I, I believe, is somewhere in the way of College Libraries; if you know where, direct to him the accompanying note, the purport of which is to request that he (a most fit man) will hunt out a passage in an old Lyons or Leyden edition of Ptolemy, impugning the authenticity or veracity of Amerigo Vespucci's letters, as they appear in the *Novus Orbis* of Grynaeus. For I shall either prefix or append to each volume of my 'Opus' a critical account of the documents from which it is compiled. I am in the press, and have corrected seven sheets.

Landor ('Gebir') has a bill coming before Parliament, which will take him to town in four or five weeks. Shall I introduce him to you, on the ground that you may possibly give him information which may save him some trouble? You will thus see one of the most extraordinary men that it has ever been my fortune to fall in with, and one who would be one of the greatest, if it were possible to tame him. He does more than any of the gods of all my mythologies, for his very words are thunder and lightning,—such is the power and the splendour with which they burst out: but all is perfectly natural; there is no trick about him,—no preaching, no parade, no playing off.

I will wrap up this in Coleridge's Prospectus. For *The Friend* itself you may whistle these three months, and God knows how much longer. Hitherto, however, there is no other blame attachable to him than that he carried a prospectus wet from the pen to the printer, without consulting anybody, or giving himself time for consideration, and so a day was fixed for the appear-

ance of the first number which was impossibly soon. Meantime, a hundred difficulties open upon him in the way of publication, and doubtless some material change must be made in the plan. I advise half-a-crown or five shillings numbers irregularly, whenever they are ready; but no promised time, no promised quantity, no promised anything. The Prospectus looks too much like what it intends to be, talks confidently to the public about what the public cares not a curse for, and has about it a sort of unmanly *humblefication*, which is not sincere, which the very object of the paper gives the lie to, which may provoke some people, and can conciliate nobody. Yet, such as it is, I shall augur best of those persons who expected most from it, such a habit of thinking, and such a train of thinking is manifested there.

Have you seen Wordsworth's essays in the *Courier* upon the Cintra Convention? The second appeared in to-night's,—that is, Friday, the 13th. They will be separately published. God help us, Rickman! If anything can ruin Spain, and England too, it will be such generals and such ministers as we are destined to be cursed with. Even now the game is in our hands, if we knew how to play it. But these wretches have no principles of action, no moral courage; their boldness is only face deep,—bronze over plaister of Paris heads—and their talents just equal to the dirty job-work which has long been the main business of what is called government in England.

When you see or communicate with Arrowsmith, will you tell him that what I have finally determined about the map is, to have it as large as it conveniently can be for a quarto book; to have the whole of South America in outline, marking only the chief places, the rivers as minutely as can be, and Brazil as full as it can be made. It is most likely that I and my uncle may be able to made additions to this part from our manuscript stores.

I am hard at work, transcribing and filling up skeleton chapters, and rewriting one from better materials

than were originally before me. My book will be very unlike all other histories,—not, God knows, from any affectation of making it so, but from the very nature of its subject.

Remember me to Mrs. R. We hope her little one may be left to breathe Sussex air this summer, while she accompanies you thus far on the way to Scotland. It will not be easy perhaps to leave one; but it will be more difficult by and by to leave two. Time, therefore, should not be lost. God bless you. R. S.

PS. I have seen to-night what I never expected to see,—a book of mine advertised with a recommendation from the Anti-Jacobins!

68. To Ebenezer Elliott

Keswick, Feb. 3, 1809.

Sir,—Yesterday I received your note enclosing the specimen of your poems. I have perused that specimen, but my advice cannot be comprised in a few words.

A literary, as well as a medical opinion, Mr. Elliott, must needs be blindly given, unless the age and circumstances of the person who requires it are known. When I advised Henry White to publish a second volume of poems, it was because he had fixed his heart upon a University education, and this seemed to be a feasible method of raising funds for that end; his particular circumstances rendering that prudent which would otherwise have been very much the reverse. For poetry is not a marketable article unless there be something strange or peculiar to give it a fashion; and in his case what money might possibly have been raised, would, in almost every instance, have been considered rather as given to the author than paid for his book. Your poem would not find purchasers except in the circle of your own friends; out of that circle not twenty copies would be sold. I believe not half that number.

You are probably a young man, Sir, and it is plain

from this specimen that you possess more than one of those powers which form the poet, and those in a far more than ordinary degree. Whether your plans of life are such as to promise leisure for that attention, (almost it might be said that devotement), without which no man can ever become a great poet, you yourself must know. If they should, you will in a very few years have outgrown this poem, and would then be sorry to see it in print, irrecoverably given to the public, because you would feel it to be an inadequate proof of your own talents. If, on the other hand, you consider poetry as merely an amusement or an ornament of youth, to be laid aside in riper years for the ordinary pursuits of the world, with still less indulgence will you then regard the printed volume, for you will reckon it among the follies of which you are ashamed. In either case it is best not to publish.

It is far, very far, from my wish to discourage or depress you. There is great promise in this specimen; it has all the faults which I should wish to see in the writings of a young poet, as the surest indications that he has that in him which will enable him to become a good one. But no young man can possibly write a good narrative poem; though I believe he cannot by any other means so effectually improve himself as by making the attempt. I myself published one at the age of twenty-one: it made a reputation for me,—not so much by its merits, as because it was taken up by one party, and abused by another, almost independently of its merits or demerits, at a time when party-spirit was more violent than it is to be hoped it will ever be again. What has been the consequences of this publication? That the poem from beginning to end was full of incorrect language and errors of every kind; that all the weeding of years could never weed it clean; and that many people at this day rate me, not according to the standard of my present intellect, but by what it was fourteen years ago. Your subject, also, has the same disadvantage with mine,

that it is anti-national: and believe me, this is a grievous one; for though we have both been right in our feelings, yet to feel *against* our own country can only be right upon great and transitory occasions, and none but our contemporaries can feel with us,—none but those who remember the struggle and took part in it. And you are more unfortunate than I was, for America is acting at this time unnaturally against England; and every reader will feel this; and his sense of what the Americans are now, will make him fancy that you paint falsely in describing them as they were then. There is yet another reason—criticism is conducted upon a different plan from what it was when I commenced my career. You live near the Dragon of Wantley's den; but you will provoke enemies as venomous if you publish; and Heaven knows whether or no you are gifted with armour of proof against them. Nor is it the effect that malicious censure and ridicule might produce upon your own feelings which is of so much importance, as what would be produced upon your friends. They who are so only in name will derive a provoking pleasure from seeing you laughed at and abused; they who love you will feel more pain than you yourself, because you will and must have a higher confidence in yourself, and a stronger conviction of injustice than they can be supposed to possess.

The sum of my advice is—do not publish this poem; but if you can without grievous imprudence afford to write poetry, continue so to do, because, hereafter, you will write it well. As yet you have only green fruit to offer; wait a season, and there will be a fair and full gathering when it is ripe.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

69. To WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Keswick, February 9, 1809.

MY DEAR LANDOR,—You have a Bill coming before Parliament. The Speaker's Secretary happens to be one of my very intimate friends, and one of the men

in the world for whom I have the highest respect. It may be some convenience to you, upon this occasion, to know him, because he can give you every necessary information respecting Parliamentary business, and thus, perhaps, spare you some needless trouble; and there needs no other introduction than knocking at his door, and sending up your name, with which he is well acquainted. Rickman is his name, and you will find it over his door, in St. Stephen's Court, New Palace Yard, next door to the Speaker's. I will tell you what kind of a man he is: his outside has so little polish about it, that once having gone from Christ Church to Poole in his own boat, he was taken by the pressgang; his robust figure, hard-working hands, and hoarse voice all tending to deceive them. A little of this is worn off. He is the strongest and clearest headed man that I have ever known. *Pondere, numero, et mensura,* is his motto; but to all things he carries the same reasoning and investigating intellect as to mathematical science, and will find out, in Homer and the Bible, facts necessarily to be inferred from the text, and which yet have as little been supposed to be there intimated, as the existence of metal was suspected in potash before Davy detected it there. I have often said that I learnt how to see, for the purposes of poetry, from 'Gebir'; how to read, for the purposes of history, from Rickman. His manners are stoical; they are like the husk of the cocoa-nut, and his inner nature is like the milk within its kernel. When I go to London, I am always his guest; he gives me but half his hand when he welcomes me at the door, but I have his whole heart; and there is not that thing in the world which he thinks would serve or gratify me that he does not do for me, unless it be something which he thinks I can as well do myself. The subject which he best understands is political economy. Were there but half a dozen such men in the House of Commons, there would be courage, virtue, and wisdom enough there to save this country from that revolution to which it is so certainly approaching.

I should not have written just now, had it not been

to mention Rickman, thinking that you may find it useful to know him; for I wished, when writing, to tell you of *Kehama*; and a good many interruptions have occurred to delay my progress; indispositions of my own, or of the children's,—this latter the only thing concerning which I am anxious overmuch. At present my wife is seriously ill; and when I shall be sufficiently at ease to do anything, God knows. Another heat will finish the poem.

I hope you will not return to Spain. What is to be done in that country must be behind stone walls, not in the open field. Moore should have dispersed his army among the frontier towns from the Minho to the Guadiana, and then have worn out the patience of the French, while we fitted out a greater army to relieve him. I do not abate a jot of heart or hope, as to the ultimate issue of the struggle. Nay, I am, and ever have been, fully persuaded, that if we landed 100,000 men near Bilbao, secured the passes, shut the French in Spain, and landed 50,000 men to fight them there, we should then have a campaign to which the world has never seen a parallel since the battle of Platæa. But we are palsied at home. There is not one statesman among us who has either wisdom or virtue.

Coleridge's essay is expected to start in March.

My uncle, Mr. Hill, is settled at his parsonage at Staunton-upon-Wye,—in that savage part of the world to which your cedar plantation will give new beauty, and your name new interest, when those cedars shall have given place to their offspring. It is probable that you have no other neighbour so well informed within the same distance. Next year, God willing, I shall travel to the south, and halt with him. It is likely that I may then find you out, either at Llantony, or somewhere in the course of a wide circuit. Meantime I will still hope that some fair breeze of inclination may send you here to talk about Spain, to plan a great poem, and to cruise with me about the Derwentwater. God bless you.

R. SOUTHEY.

70. To Walter Savage Landor

April 23, 1809.

I shall send three sections of *Kehama* to meet you in London; three more will complete it, and would have so done before this time had all things been going on well with me. I had a daughter born on the 27th last month; a few days after the birth her mother was taken ill, and for some time there was cause of serious alarm. This, God be thanked, is over. The night before last we had another alarm of the worst kind, though happily this also is passing away. My little boy went to bed with some slight indications of a trifling cold. His mother went up as usual to look at him before supper; she thought he coughed in a strange manner, called me, and I instantly recognized the sound of the croup. We have a good apothecary within three minutes' walk, and luckily he was at home. He immediately confirmed our fears. The child was taken out of bed and bled in the jugular vein, a blister placed on the throat next morning, and by these vigorous and timely remedies we hope and trust the disease is subdued. But what a twelve hours did we pass, knowing the nature of the disease, and only hoping the efficacy of the remedy. Even now I am far, very far, from being at ease. There is a love which passeth the love of women, and which is more lightly alarmed than the wakefullest jealousy.

Landor, I am not a stoic at home: I feel as you do about the fall of an old tree; but, O Christ! what a pang it is to look upon the young shoot and think it will be cut down. And this is the thought which almost at all times haunts me; it comes upon me in moments when I know not whether the tears that start are of love or of bitterness. There is an evil, too, in seeing all things like a poet; circumstances which would glide over a healthier mind sink into mine; everything comes to me with its whole force —the full meaning of a look, a gesture, a child's im-

perfect speech, I can perceive, and cannot help perceiving; and thus am I made to remember what I would give the world to forget.

Enough, and too much of this. The leaven of anxiety is working in my whole system; I will try to quiet it by forcing myself to some other subject.

What prevented *Gebir* from being read by the foolish? I believe the main reason was, that it is too hard for them; more than that, it was too good. That they should understand its merits was not to be expected; but they did not find meaning enough upon the surface to make them fancy they understood it. Why should you not write a poem as good, and more intelligible, and display the same powers upon a happier subject? Yet certain it is, that *Gebir* excited far more attention than you seem to be aware of. Two manifest imitations have appeared—Rough's play of *The Conspiracy of Gowrie*, and the first part of Sotheby's *Saul*. When Gifford published his *Juvenal*, one of the most base attacks that ever disgraced a literary journal was made upon it in the *Critical Review* by some one of the heroes of his Baviad. Gifford wrote an angry reply, in which he brought forward all the offences of the *Review* for many years back; one of those offences was its praise of *Gebir*. I laughed when I heard this, guessing pretty well at the nature of Gifford's feelings; for I had been the reviewer of whose partiality he complained. *Gebir* came to me with a parcel of other poems, which I was to kill off. I was young in the trade, and reviewed it injudiciously, so that everybody supposed it to be done by some friend of the author. For I analysed the story; studded it with as many beautiful extracts as they would allow room for; praised its merits almost up to the height of my feelings, and never thought of telling the reader that if he went to the book itself he would find any more difficulty in comprehending it than he found in that abstract. Thus, instead of serving the poem, I in reality injured it. The world, nowadays, never believes praise to be sincere; men are

so accustomed to hunt for faults, that they will not think any person can honestly express unmingled admiration.

I once passed an evening with Professor Young at Davy's. The conversation was wholly scientific, and of course I was a listener. But I have heard the history of Thomas Young, as he is still called by those who knew him when he was a Quaker; and believe him to be a very able man; generally speaking I have little liking for men of science: their pursuits seem to deaden the imagination, and harden the heart; they are so accustomed to analyse and anatomize everything, to understand, or fancy they understand, whatever comes before them, that they frequently become mere materialists, account for everything by mechanism and motion, and would put out of the world all that makes the world endurable. I do not undervalue their knowledge, nor the utility of their discoveries; but I do not like the men. My own nature requires something more than they teach; it pants after things unseen; it exists upon the hope of that better futurity which all its aspirations promise and seem to prove.—God bless you! R. S.

71. To Lieut. Southey, H.M.S. 'Dreadnought'

Keswick, Monday, May 22, 1809.

My dear Tom,—My last letter told you of Herbert's danger, and his recovery. You will be a little shocked at the intelligence in this. We lost Emma yesterday night. Five days ago she was in finer health than we had ever seen her, and I repeatedly remarked it. For a day or two she had been ailing; on Saturday night breathed shortly, and was evidently ill. Edmondson repeatedly saw her, thought her better at ten o'clock, and assured us he saw no danger. In half an hour she literally fell asleep without a struggle. Edith is as well as should be expected, and I, perhaps, better. You know how I take toothache and tooth drawings, and I have almost learnt to bear moral pain, not, indeed,

with the same levity, but with as few outward and visible signs. In fact, God be thanked for it, there never was a man who had more entirely set his heart upon things permanent and eternal than I have done; the transitoriness of everything here is always present to my feeling as well as my understanding. Were I to speak as sincerely of my family as Wordsworth's little girl, my story—that I have five children; three of them at home, and two under my mother's care in heaven. No more of this; and, to convince you that I am not more unhappy than I profess, I will fill up the sheet, instead of sending you a mere annotation of this loss. It is well you left her such an infant, for you are thus spared some sorrow.

Ballantyne has just sent me a present of Campbell's new poem, and enclosed the last *Edinburgh Review* in the parcel. They have taken occasion there, under cover of a methodist's book, to attempt an answer to my Missionary Defence. I hear from all quarters that this article of mine has excited much notice, and produced considerable effect. I had the great advantage of being in earnest, as well as thoroughly understanding the subject. The *Edinburgh* reviewer knew nothing of Hindoo history except what newspapers and pamphlets had taught him. No wonder, therefore, that I should have the upper hand of such a man in the argument.

Campbell's poem[1] has disappointed his friends, Ballantyne tells me. It is, however, better than I expected, except in story, which is meagre. This gentleman, also, who is one of Wordsworth's abusers, has been nibbling at imitation, and palpably borrowed from the two poems of *Ruth* and *The Brothers*. 'Tis amusing envy! to see how the race of borrowers upon all occasions abuse us who do not borrow. The main topic against me is, that I do not imitate Virgil in my story, Pope in my language, &c. &c.

Scott is still detained in London, and this will prevent me from going with him to Edinburgh. Indeed,

[1] 'Gertrude of Wyoming.'

if engagements had not existed, I could not have left home now, for Edith will find it melancholy enough for some time to come with me, and without me it would be worse. Herbert, thank God, seems well; *seems* is all one dares say: of all precarious things there is nothing so precarious as life. You would have been delighted with your eldest niece if you could have seen the sorrow she was in this morning, for fear her mother should die for grief: and then she said she should die too, and then her papa would die for grief about her. Just now, Tom, it might have been happier for you and me if we had gone to bed as early as John and Eliza; a hundred years hence the advantage will be on our side. My notions about life are much the same as they are about travelling—there is a good deal of amusement on the road, but, after all, one wants to be at rest. Evils of this kind—if they may be called evils—soon cure themselves; the wound smarts, in a little while it heals, and, if the scar did not sometimes renew the recollection of the smart, it would, perhaps, be forgotten.

My *History* gets on; the proof before me reaches to page 336: I look at it with great pleasure. Whether I may live to complete the series of works which I have projected, and, in good part, executed, God only knows; be that as it may, in what is done I shall, to the best of my power, have on all occasions enforced good opinions upon those subjects which are of most importance to mankind.

God bless you! It is long since I have heard from you; what can you be cruising after? Things go on well in Spain, and will go on better when the Wellesleys get there.—Once more, God bless you! R. S.

72. To Walter Scott

Keswick, July 30, 1809.

My dear Scott,—Wordsworth's pamphlet will fail of producing any general effect, because the sentences are long and involved; and his friend, De Quincey,

who corrected the press, has rendered them more obscure by an unusual system of punctuation. This fault will outweigh all its merits. The public never can like anything which they feel it difficult to understand. They will affect to like it, as in the case of Burke, if the reputation of the writer be such that not to admire him is a confession of ignorance; but even in Burke's case, the public admiration was merely affected: his finer beauties were not remarked, and it was only his party politics that were generally understood, while the philosophy which he brought to their aid was heathen Greek to the multitude of his readers. I impute Wordsworth's want of perspicuity to two causes—his admiration of Milton's prose, and his habit of dictating instead of writing: if he were his own scribe his eye would tell him where to stop; but, in dictating, his own thoughts are to himself familiarly intelligible, and he goes on, unconscious either of the length of the sentence, or the difficulty a common reader must necessarily find in following its meaning to the end, and unravelling all its involutions.

A villainous cold, which makes me sleep as late as I possibly can in the morning, because the moment I wake it wakes with me, has prevented me finishing *Kehama*: it would else, ere this, have been completed. I think of publishing it on my own account, in a pocket volume, of about 350 pages; but this is not yet determined. One of the pleasures which I had promised myself in seeing you was, that of showing you this wildest of all wild poems, believing that you will be one of the few persons who will relish it. The rhymes are as irregular as your own, but in a different key, and I expect to be abused for having given the language the freedom and strength of blank verse, though I pride myself upon the manner in which this is combined with rhyme.

The Eclogue[1] which I have sent Ballantyne has suffered a little by having all its local allusions cut

[1] 'The Alderman's Funeral.'

out. This was done lest what was intended as a general character should have been interpreted into individual satire. The thing was suggested by my accidentally crossing such a funeral some years ago at Bristol; and, had I been disposed to personal satire, the hero of the procession would have afforded ample scope for it. As soon as he knew his case was desperate he called together all the persons to whom he was indebted in his mercantile concerns;—'Gentlemen,' said he, 'I am going to die, and my death will be an inconvenience to you, because it will be some time before you can get your accounts settled with my executors; now if you will allow me a handsome discount, I'll settle them myself at once.' They came into the proposal, and the old alderman turned his death into nine hundred pounds' profit.

If 'Queen Orraca' is not too long for the *English Minstrelsy*, I will with great pleasure send off a corrected copy for it.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

73. To DR. H. H. SOUTHEY

Keswick, August 17, 1809.

Last night a letter from Thomas Rees communicated to me the intelligence of the death of the *Annual Review*. The Long Men of the Row were long in making up their minds to discontinue it; it is not above ten days ago that a large parcel of books designed for another volume arrived here, and King Thomas told me he should send off one to you in a few days.

Now then, supposing that you will seriously set about the 'CRUSADES', I will give you such directions in the art of historical book-keeping as may save time and facilitate labour.

Make your writing-books in foolscap quarto, and write on only one side of a leaf; draw a line down the margin, marking off space enough for your references, which should be given at the end of every paragraph—noting page, book, or chapter of the author referred to

This minuteness is now demanded, and you will yourself find it useful; for in transcribing or in correcting proofs, it is often requisite to turn to the original authority. Take the best author, that is to say, the one that has written most at length of all the *original* authors, upon the particular point of time on which you are employed, and draw up your account from him; then, on the opposite page, correct and amplify this from every other who has written upon the same subject. This page should be divided into two columns, one of about two-thirds of its breadth, the other the remaining one. You are thus enabled to *add* to your *additions*.

One of these books you should have for your geography; that is to say, for collecting descriptions of all the principal scenes of action (which must be done from books of travels), their situation, their strength, their previous history, and, in the notes, their present state.

These descriptions you can insert in their proper places when you transcribe. Thus, also, you should collect accounts of the different tribes and dynasties whom you have occasion to mention. In this manner the information which is only to be got at piecemeal, and oftentimes incidentally when you are looking for something else, is brought together with least trouble, and almost imperceptibly.

All relative matter, not absolutely essential to the subject, should go in the form of supplementary notes, and these you may make as amusing as you please, the more so, and the more curious, the better. Much trouble is saved by writing them on separate bits of paper, each the half of a quarter of a foolscap sheet—numbering them, and making an index of them; in this manner they are ready for use when they are wanted.

It was some time before I fell into this system of book-keeping, and I believe no better can be desired. A Welsh triad might comprehend all the rules for style. Say what you have to say as *perspicuously* as

possible, as *briefly* as possible, and as *rememberably* as possible, and take no other thought about it. Omit none of those little circumstances which give life to narration, and bring old manners, old feelings, and old times before your eyes.

Gibbon will supply you with the names of the main authorities. The *Gesta Dei per Francos* must be one of the *first* importance, *quoad* order of time. This Gibbon refers to for the best account of the state of Jerusalem from the time of Heraclius (i. e. the beginning of Mohammedanism) to the Crusades. He refers also to a memoir of M. de Guignes, 'Sur le Commerce des François dans le Levant, avant les Croisades,' in the *Mem. de l'Academie des Inscriptions*, t. xxxvii, pp. 467–500. Your first chapters will be the most difficult, and should be written last. I would advise you not to think of introductory matter till you are far advanced in the book, and find your stock of knowledge of considerable amount.

For the first Crusade you will want the *Gesta Dei*, 'The Acts of the Council of Clermont,' which are in the great collection of Councils, t. xii, Anna Comnena. I dare say the *Byzantine Historians* are in the College library. Look at Gibbon's nineteenth note to his chapter lviii, for his authorities. His forty-first to the same chapter is full of minute references. But you must not be contented with merely following his references; unless you read with your own eyes you will do nothing. Do not be dismayed at the sight of a large book; read on manfully, and you will soon find in the accumulation of knowledge quite as great a pleasure as the veriest miser finds in the accumulation of gold. Read half a dozen authors at once, and thus you never need dwell upon one till you are tired of it; and begin the history of two or three Crusades at once, that you may be able to go on with one part of the narrative when you are in want of materials for another. When you have done enough *to give security* to yourself that you will do more, I will put in requisition all my means of obtaining books, and borrow for you from Heber

whatever his library contains. Read every traveller that has ever written upon Syria, Egypt, or Palestine—in the worst of them you may chance to find something which will throw light upon history, and make you fully understand circumstances which else you might imperfectly have comprehended. I can be of some use to you in the way of annotations, and nothing in the course of my reading which bears upon your subject shall be let slip. Go to work with a good heart, and you will soon find yourself the happier for having such a work in hand.

I have undertaken to write for Ballantyne's *Edinburgh Annual Register* the history of affairs in Spain and Portugal last year, for which I shall be well paid; but I am hard worked, being pressed for time. If Mary can tell me any anecdotes of Junot's character and conduct, or of the state of Lisbon during his reign there, I dare say I shall be able to make good use of them. To-day I am going to Lowther, from whence I return on Saturday. Yesterday I took Miss Betham, Edith, and Mrs. Coleridge up Skiddaw, being their first appearance upon that stage. They walked it, and did it well by help of meat and drink on the way. Coming home Mrs. C. got into a bog some way above her knees, and I saved her life! I wish you had been there to have assisted in it. Afterwards I washed her petticoat in one of the gills, and carried it home upon my stick. Oh, Dominie, Doctor! if you had but been there! Our love to Mary.—God bless you. R. S.

74. To S. T. Coleridge

TO THE FRIEND

[*Without date.*]

Sir,—I know not whether your subscribers have expected too much from you, but it appears to me that you expect too much from your subscribers; and that, however accurately you may understand the diseases of the age, you have certainly mistaken its temper. In the first place, Sir, your essays are too long. 'Brevity,'

says a contemporary journalist, 'is the humour of the times; a tragedy must not exceed fifteen hundred lines, a fashionable preacher must not trespass above fifteen minutes upon his congregation. We have short waistcoats and short campaigns; everything must be short—except lawsuits, speeches in Parliament, and tax-tables.' It is expressly stated, in the prospectus of a collection of extracts, called *The Beauties of Sentiment*, that the extracts shall always be complete sense, and *not very long*. Secondly, Sir, though your essays appear in so tempting a shape to a lounger, the very fiends themselves were not more deceived by the *lignum vitae* apples when

> They, fondly thinking to allay
> Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
> Chew'd bitter ashes,

than the reader is who takes up one of your papers from breakfast table, parlour-window, sofa, or ottoman, thinking to amuse himself with a few minutes' light reading. We are informed, upon the authority of no less a man than Sir Richard Phillips, how 'it has long been a subject of just complaint among the lovers of English literature, that our language has been deficient in lounging or parlour-window books'; and to remove the opprobrium from the language, Sir Richard advertises a list, mostly ending in *ana*, under the general title of *Lounging Books or Light Reading*. I am afraid, Mr. Friend, that your predecessors would never have obtained their popularity unless their essays had been of the description Ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ φίλον—and this is a light age.

You have yourself observed that few converts were made by Burke; but the cause which you have assigned does not sufficiently explain why a man of such powerful talents and so authoritative a reputation should have produced so little an effect upon the minds of the people. Was it not because he neither was nor could be generally understood? Because, instead of endeavouring to make difficult things easy of comprehension he made

things which were easy in themselves, difficult to be comprehended by the manner in which he presented them, evolving their causes and involving their consequences, till the reader whose mind was not habituated to metaphysical discussions, neither knew in what his arguments began nor in what they ended? You have told me that the straightest line must be the shortest; but do not you yourself sometimes nose out your way, hound-like, in pursuit of truth, turning and winding, and doubling and running when the same object might be reached in a tenth part of the time by darting straightforward like a greyhound to the mark? Burke failed of effect upon the people for this reason—there was the difficulty of mathematics without the precision in his writings. You looked through the process without arriving at the proof. It was the fashion to read him because of his rank as a political partisan; otherwise he would not have been read. Even in the House of Commons he was admired more than he was listened to; not a sentence came from him which was not pregnant with seeds of thought, if it had fallen upon good ground; yet his speeches convinced nobody, while the mellifluous orations of Mr. Pitt persuaded his majorities of whatever he wished to persuade them; because they were easily understood, what mattered it to him that they were as easily forgotten?

The reader, Sir, must think before he can understand you; is it not a little unreasonable to require from him an effort which you have yourself described as so very painful a one? and is not this effort not merely difficult but in many cases impossible? All brains, Sir, were not made for thinking: modern philosophy has taught us that they are galvanic machines, and thinking is only an accident belonging to them. Intellect is not essential to the functions of life; in the ordinary course of society it is very commonly dispensed with; and we have lived, Mr. Friend, to witness experiments for carrying on government without it. This is surely a proof that it is a rare commodity; and yet you expect it in all your subscribers!

Give us your moral medicines in a more 'elegant preparation'. The Reverend J. Gentle administers his physic in the form of tea; Dr. Solomon prefers the medium of a cordial; Mr. Ching exhibits his in gingerbread nuts; Dr. Barton in wine; but you, Mr. Friend, come with a tonic bolus, bitter in the mouth, difficult to swallow, and hard of digestion.

My dear Coleridge,—All this, were it not for the Sir and the Mr. Friend, is like a real letter from me to you: I fell into the strain without intending it, and would not send it were it not to show you that I have attempted to do something. From jest I got into earnest, and, trying to pass from earnest to jest, failed. It was against the grain, and would not do. I had re-read the eight last numbers, and the truth is, they left me no heart for jesting or for irony. In time they will do their work; it is the form of publication only that is unlucky, and that cannot now be remedied. But this evil is merely temporary. Give two or three amusing numbers, and you will hear of admiration from every side. Insert a few more poems—any that you have except *Christabel*, for that is of too much value. There is scarcely anything you could do which would excite so much notice as if you were *now* to write the character of Bonaparte, announced in former times for 'to-morrow', and to-morrow and to-morrow; and I think it would do good by counteracting that base spirit of condescension towards him, which I am afraid is gaining ground; and by showing the people what grounds they have for hope.—God bless you! R. S.

75. To Lieut. Southey, H.M.S. 'Lyra'

Nov. 25, 1809.

My dear Tom,—I write to you for two reasons . . .; the other, a more interesting one, is to tell you that I have this day finished *Kehama*, having written two hundred lines since yesterday morning. Huzza, Aballiboozobanganorribo![1] It is not often in his life-

[1] See 'The Doctor', &c.

time a man finishes a long poem, and as I have nobody to give me joy, I must give myself joy. 24 sections, 4,844 lines; 200 or 300 more will probably be added in course of correction and transcription; all has been done before breakfast (since its resumption) except about 170 lines of the conclusion. Huzza! better than lying a-bed, Tom; and though I am not quite ready to begin another, I will rise as usual to-morrow and work at the plans of *Pelayo* and *Robin Hood*. And now I am a little impatient that you should see the whole and shall feel another job off my hands when your copy is completed. By beginning earlier with the next poem, I shall be able to keep pace with it, and send it to you as fast as it proceeds.

Very very few persons will like *Kehama*; everybody will wonder at it; it will increase my reputation without increasing my popularity: a general remark will be, what a pity that I have wasted so much power. I care little about this, having in the main pleased myself, and all along amused myself; every generation will afford me some half-dozen admirers of it, and the everlasting column of Dante's fame does not stand upon a wider base. There will be a good many minor ornaments to insert, the metre will in many places be enriched, and the story perhaps sometimes be rendered more perspicuous. Now that the whole is before me, I can see where to add and alter. If it receives half the improvements which *Thalaba* did, I shall be well content.

Pelayo is to be in blank verse: where the whole interest is to be derived from human character and the inherent dignity of the story, I will not run the hazard of enfeebling the finer parts for the sake of embellishing the weaker ones. I shall pitch *Robin Hood* in a different key—such as the name would lead one to expect—a wild pastoral movement, in the same sort of plastic metre as *Garci Ferrandez*. I shall aim it at about 2,000 lines, and endeavour not to exceed 3,000.

The state of home politics is perfectly hopeless. Bonaparte seems thoroughly to despise all we can do;

all that we have done he is certainly entitled to despise; but if we had Marlborough or Peterborough alive again, six months would close his career for ever even now. It remains to be seen whether he despises the Spaniards enough to let things go on in their present course, or if he will enter Spain again and overrun the open country. In that case there is a line of large towns between Barcelona and Cadiz, along the coast, some of which may be expected to hold out like Zaragoza and Gerona, which we could assist by sea, and which would afford opportunities for such men as Cochrane or Sir S. Smith grievously to annoy the besiegers—indeed to cut them off if they had a good force. There ought to be four flying squadrons of 5,000 men, each ready to land wherever they were wanted; under Cochrane they would keep five times their number of French in continual alarm. The only possible hope from the Marquis Wellesley is, that he may insist on a vigorous effort; what we are doing now is just worse than nothing. Our men drink themselves to death; our officers learn to despise the Spaniards and Portuguese, because they do not dress, eat, and drink like themselves; and their opinions pass current here in England; and the consequence is, that never were a people so cruelly and basely calumniated as this nation, which has done more against the powers of France, and under every possible disadvantage, than all the rest of Europe conjointly. What a different story Sir Robert Wilson would tell, who has kept the field with his legion of Portuguese, through all the perilous season!—God bless you! R. S.

76. To Miss Barker

Keswick, Jan. 29, 1810.

Dear Senhora,—My daughter and I have each to thank you for a letter—both very good ones in their kind. I have, as you may suppose, had many things said to me concerning the *Friend*, but nothing so much to the purpose as what you have remarked. It is not

a little extraordinary that Coleridge, who is fond of logic, and who has an actual love and passion for close, hard thinking, should write in so rambling and inconclusive a manner; while I, who am utterly incapable of that toil of thought in which he delights, never fail to express myself perspicuously, and to the point. I owe, perhaps, something of this to the circumstance of having lived with him during that year in my life which was most likely to give my mind its lasting character. Disliking his inordinate love of talking, I was naturally led to avoid the same fault; when we were alone, and he talked his best (which was always at those times), I was pleased to listen; and when we were in company, and I heard the same things repeated—repeated to every fresh company, seven times in the week if we were in seven parties—still I was silent, in great measure from depression of spirits at perceiving those vices in his nature which soon appeared to be incurable. When he provoked me into an argument, I made the most of my time; and, as it was not easy to get in more than a few words, took care to make up in weight for what they wanted in measure. His habits have continued, and so have mine. Coleridge requested me to write him such a letter upon the faults of the *Friend* as he might insert and reply to. I did so; but it was not inserted, and therefore I am sorry I did not copy it. It described the fault you have remarked as existing in Burke, and having prevented him from ever persuading anybody to his opinions—for Burke made no proselytes except such as wanted an excuse for professing to change their party. You read his book, you saw what his opinions were; but they were given in such a way, evolving the causes of everything, and involving the consequences, that you never knew from whence he set out, nor where he was going. So it is with C.; he goes to work like a hound, nosing his way, turning, and twisting, and winding, and doubling, till you get weary with following the mazy movements. My way is, when I see my object, to dart at it like a greyhound.

Never was anything so grievously mismanaged as the *Friend*. Because he would have all the profit (having taken it in his head that I was cheated by my publisher), he would publish for himself; thus has he the whole trouble of collecting his money, the whole responsibility, instead of having a publisher to look to; and the expense of postage will far, very far, exceed any publisher's percentage. Then he writes to the public about all his difficulties and his projects, as if they wanted to know anything about them—not perceiving that this lowers him in the eyes of the foolish, and certainly does not raise him in the judgement of the wise. And certainly of all modes of publication that could be devised, nothing could be so ill adapted for such materials as a weekly form. Had he brought out these same papers in a body, either as a system, or as so many essays, they would have commanded more attention, he would have been saved the whole anxiety of periodical exertion, and people would have had no reason to complain because they found something altogether different from what they expected. However, we must be glad to get some part of what is in him out of him in any way. Satyrane is himself, though, if you are versed in Spenser, you will think the name marvellously inappropriate.

Mrs. C. takes on herself poor Jackson's house, in expectation that C. will one day come back; and still more because he will have a place to which he may come whenever he likes, as if it were his own house—a thing which cannot be with my establishment, ought not, and shall not. Mrs. Wilson lives there, and will do so as long as she lives, and we go on as usual in everything at present, except in the division of rent. But the truth is that in my own mind I look on to your coming here almost as if it were a settled thing, from the great fitness that it should be so settled. My worldly concerns are in an improving way. If this engagement for the *Register* continues three or four years it will set me above the world; that is to say, it will clear off all accounts with Longman, and my

income will exceed my expenditure. For, while it lasts, that and my pension will supply all current demands; and everything else of past or present labour forms a sinking fund, which would ere long clear my way, and enable me to lay something by. I am already on the point of insuring my life for £1,000. This is securing something; and, in case of my death, I have prepared directions for a subscription edition of my collected works, which, if only a thousand copies were subscribed for, would produce not less than £3,200, leaving still the contingent profits and the copyrights untouched, as long as the law allows them. This property (if I do not much overrate myself and my good name) is of a good kind, and it is yearly accumulating. I believe more than 1,000 names may be procured with little exertion when I am dead—not improbably twice the number; and I have no fears whatever about the worldly fortunes of those whom I may leave behind.

The printers use me ill, but they do not vex me, because I am not vexable by such things. Send me a story about mad-dogs and goose dung, of which I remember the substance, but forget the particulars. Do you see the *Quarterly Review*? I am likely to do more in it than I have yet done. There are materials before me for another set-to at the Evangelicals. My intention is not to be angry with them, but only to dissect them alive. *Kehama* is at the printer's, and I am every evening disappointed of the first proof sheet. *Pelayo* is begun, though not advanced above the first ninety lines. It promises well. I hoped to have sent you my first volume of *Brazil* long ago; it is the printer who delays it. My uncle has the living of Streatham, and removes to it in the summer.—God bless you.

R. S.

PS. First proof of *Kehama* arrived this evening. Huzza!!

77. To Walter Scott

Durham, May 11, 1810.

My dear Scott,—Yesterday evening, on my return from the race-ground, I found your poem [1] lying on the table. A provoking engagement called me from it for two or three hours; but notwithstanding this, and my obstinate habit of getting early to bed, I did not go to rest till I had finished the book. Every reader's first thought, when he begins to think at all, will be to compare you with yourself. If I may judge from my own feelings, the *Lady* will be a greater favourite than either of her elder brethren. There is in all, the same skilful inscrutability of story till the artist is pleased to touch the spring which lays the whole machine open; but while the plot is thus well wound up in the new poem, I think the narrative is more uniformly perspicuous than in the two former. There is in all, the like originality and beauty of circumstances. I am not willing to admit that some of the situations in the *Lay* and *Marmion can* be outdone, and if I thought they *were* outdone last night, and still incline to think so, it is probably because new impressions are more vivid than the strongest recollection.

I wished most of the songs away on the first perusal; on recurring to them, I was glad they were there; yet, wherever they interrupt the narrative, without in any way tending to carry on the business of the story, my admiration of the things themselves does not prevent me from thinking them misplaced. Your title is likely to be a popular one; and for that very reason, I wish it had not been chosen. Of course it led me to expect some tale of Merlin or King Arthur's days; but what is of real consequence to one who loves old lays is, that whenever hereafter the *Lady of the Lake* will be mentioned, most readers will suppose your Ellen is intended; and in this way a sort of offence against antiquity has been committed. This is some-

[1] *The Lady of the Lake.*

thing in the manner of Momus's criticism, to find fault with the trinkets of the *Lady* and with her name. But I heartily give you joy of the poem, and congratulate you with perfect confidence upon the success which you have a right to expect, which you deserve, and which you will find. The portrait seems more like the more I look at it; and my friend Camp is now doubly immortalized. This reminds me of the dog in the poem, an incident so fine that it bears as well as courts comparison with one of the most affecting passages in Homer.

Longman was instructed to send you my *Brazil*. I hope to get a long spell at the concluding volume before it is necessary to fall seriously to work upon the second *Register*. What you will think of *Kehama* I am not quite sure—of what the public will think, I can have, and never have had, the slightest doubt. No subject could have been devised more remote from human sympathies; and there are so few persons who are capable of standing aloof from them, that the subject must be admitted to have been imprudently chosen, if in choosing it I had had any other motive than that of pleasing myself and some half a dozen others. If it had been my intention to provoke censure, I could not have done it more effectually; for without intending any innovation, or being at first sensible of any, I have fallen into a style of versification as unusual as the groundwork of the story; with this, however, I am well satisfied. I have written the first canto of *Pelayo* in blank verse, and without machinery. This promises to be a striking poem, and, if it were ready now, might perhaps, in some degree, be a useful one.

The metre of the *Lady* is to me less agreeable than the more varied measure. There is an advantage in writing in a metre to which one has been little accustomed; it necessarily induces a certain change of style, and thus enables the writer to clothe his old conceptions in so different a garb, that they appear new even to himself. The alteration which you have made is not sufficiently great to obtain this advantage

—and there is a loss of variety, from which I should have predicted a loss of freedom and a loss of power. This, however, is amply confuted by the poem, which certainly is never deficient either in force or freedom.

I shall return home in the course of a fortnight; a short interval of idleness makes me feel impatient to get once more to my books and my desk. Pray remember me to Mrs. Scott, and believe me,—Very affectionately yours, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

78. To WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Keswick, Feb. 12, 1811.

I am not disappointed in *Count Julian*; it is too Greek for representation in these times, but it is altogether worthy of you. The thought and feeling which you have frequently condensed in a single line, is unlike anything in modern composition. The conclusion too is Greek. I should have known this play to be yours, had it fallen in my way without a name. There was one written ten years ago by Rough which *aimed* at being what this *is*; this has the profundity which was attempted there. I see nothing to be expunged, but I see many of what a schoolboy would call *hard* passages. Sometimes they are like water, which however beautifully pellucid, may become dark by its very depth. Your own vase of tarnished gold is a better illustration; the very richness of the metal occasions its darkness. Sometimes they are like pictures—unless you get them in precisely the right point of view, their expression is lost. I cannot tell how this is to be remedied, if it is remediable; it is what makes the difference between difficult and easy authors. I will not yet specify what the passages are which are obscure, because, upon every fresh perusal, some of them will flash upon me.

Never was a character more finely conceived than Julian. That image of his seizing the horses is in the very first rank of sublimity; it is the grandest image of power that ever poet produced.

You could not have placed the story in a finer dramatic light; but it has made you elevate some vile renegadoes into respectability. In my plan Sisabert will die by Florinda's hand, and Orpas will be cut down by Rodrigo's own hand. I go on very slowly; what I have done is too good to be sacrificed; but it will make the poem as faulty in structure as Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*; and I shall be a third of the way through it before *Pelayo* appears. My pace will soon be quickened; the way opens before me; hitherto there has been but one personage in view; to-morrow I introduce others, and shall soon get into the business of the poem. You wonder that I can think of two poems at once; it proceeds from weakness, not from strength. I could not stand the continuous excitement which you have gone through in your tragedy: in me it would not work itself off in tears; the tears would flow while in the act of composition, and would leave behind a throbbing head and a whole system in the highest state of nervous excitability, which would soon induce disease in one of its most fearful forms. From such a state I recovered in 1800 by going to Portugal, and suddenly changing climate, occupation, and all internal objects: and I have kept it off since by a good intellectual regimen.

When I have read *Count Julian* again and again, I will then make out a list of the passages which appear so difficult that ordinary readers may be supposed incapable of understanding them. When you perceive that they may be difficult to others, it will be easy, in most instances, to make the meaning more obvious. Then you must print the tragedy. It will not have many more admirers than *Gebir*; but they will be of the same class and cast; and with *Gebir* it will be known hereafter, when all the rubbish of our generation shall have been swept away.

What will you do next? Narrative is better than dramatic poetry, because it admits of the highest beauties of the drama; there are two characters in Roman history which are admirably fit for either;

but in both cases their history suits the drama better than the epic—Sertorius and Spartacus. When I was a boy, the abortive attempt at restoring the republic by Caligula's death was one of my dramatic attempts. Another was that impressive story in Tacitus of 300 slaves (I think that was the number) put to death for not preventing the murder of their master, whom one of them had killed. The Emperor Majorian is a fine character. I wish I could throw out a subject that would tempt you, but rather to a poem than a play; for though your powers for both are equal, and the play the more difficult work of the two, yet in my judgement the poem is the preferable species of composition.—God bless you! R. S.

79. To Walter Scott

Keswick, Sept. 8, 1811.

My dear Scott,—You will have thought me very remiss in not thanking you sooner for the *Vision*, if you did not remember that I had been travelling from Dan to Beersheba, and take into consideration how little opportunity can be found for the use of pen and ink in the course of a series of runaway visits, during a journey of nine hundred miles. It was given me at the Admiralty the very day that it arrived there. I opened it on the spot, discovered that a letter to Polwhele had been enclosed to me, in time for Croker to rectify the mistake by making a fair exchange, and thus saving mine from a journey to the Land's End. If, however, I have not written to you about D. Roderick. I have been talking to everybody about him. The want of plan and unity is a defect inherent in the very nature of your subject, and it would be just as absurd to censure the *Vision* for such a defect, as it is to condemn *Kehama* because all the agents are not human personages. The execution is a triumphant answer to those persons who have supposed that you could not move with ease in a metre less loose than that of your great poems. To me it appears, on the whole, better written than those greater works, for

this very reason—you have taken fewer licences of language, and have united with the majesty of that fine stanza (the most perfect that ever was constructed) an ease which is a perfect contrast to the stiffness of *Gertrude of Wyoming*.

It is remarkable that three poets should at once have been employed upon Roderick. I have a tragedy of Landor's in my desk, of which Count Julian is the hero: it contains some of the finest touches, both of passion and poetry, that I have ever seen. Roderick is also the pre-eminent personage of my own *Pelayo*, as far as it has yet proceeded. Differing so totally as we do in the complexion and management of the two poems, I was pleased to find one point of curious comparison, in which we have both represented Roderick in the act of confession, and both finished the picture highly. Our representations are so totally different, as to form a perfect contrast; yet each so fitted to the temper in which the confession is made, that it might be sworn, if you had chosen my point of time, you could have written as I have done, and that if I had written of the unrepentant king, I should have conceived of him exactly like yourself. I copy my own lines, because I think you will be gratified at seeing a parallel passage, which never can be produced except to the honour of both:—

Then Roderick knelt
Before the holy man, and strove to speak:
'Thou see'st,' he cried; 'thou see'st'—but memory
And suffocating thoughts represt the word,
And shudderings, like an ague fit, from head
To foot convulsed him. Till at length subduing
His nature to the effort, he exclaimed,
Spreading his hands, and lifting up his face,
As if resolved in penitence to bear
A human eye upon his shame,—'Thou see'st
Roderick the Goth.' That name would have sufficed
To tell its whole abhorred history.
He not the less pursued—'the ravisher!
The cause of all this ruin!' Having said,

In the same posture motionless he knelt,
Arms straightened down, and hands dispread, and eyes
Rais'd to the monk, like one who from his voice
Expected life or death.

I saw but little of Gifford in town, because he was on the point of taking wing for the Isle of Wight when I arrived. The *Review* seems to have shaken the credit of the *Edinburgh*, and might shake it still more. The way to attack the enemy with most effect is to take up those very subjects which he has handled the most unfairly, and so to treat them as to force a comparison which must end in our favour. I am about to do this upon the question of Bell and Lancaster—a question on which —— has grossly committed himself.

You may well suppose that three months' idleness has brought upon me a heavy accumulation of business. Meantime good materials for the third year's *Register* have reached me from Cadiz, and I have collected others respecting Sicily and the Ionian Islands. I saw the last volume on my road, and there I could trace your hand in a powerful, but too lenient, essay upon Jeffrey's journal.—Believe me, Yours very truly,

R. Southey.

80. To Dr. Gooch

Keswick, Dec. 15, 1811.

My dear Gooch,—I have a letter from William Taylor, of a dismal character. After stating the sum of their losses, he says, 'we cannot subsist upon the interest of what remains. The capital will last our joint lives, but I shall be abandoned to a voluntary interment in the same grave with my parents. O! that nature would realize this most convenient doom!'

Now, my reason for transcribing this passage to you is, because it made a deep impression on me, and haunts me when I lie down at night. You know more of Norwich than I do, and more of William Taylor's connexions. Who is most in his confidence? is it——? I thought of writing directly to him. But what I would say to the person who may be most likely to enter into my

wishes is, that William Taylor's friends should raise such an annuity as would secure him from penury, and at once relieve his mind from the apprehensions of it; either raising a sum sufficient to purchase it (the best way, because the least liable to accidents), or by yearly contributions; Dr. Sayers (or any other the fittest person) receiving, and regularly paying it; and he never knowing particularly from whence it comes, but merely that it is his. The former plan is the best, because, in that case, there would be only to purchase the annuity, and put the security into his hands; and this might be done without any person appearing in it, the office transmitting him the necessary documents. This, of course, is a thing upon which the very wind must not blow. Ten years hence—or, perhaps, five—if the least desirable of these plans should be found most practicable, you and Harry may be able to co-operate in it. I am ready now, either with a yearly ten pounds, or with fifty at once. If more were in my power, more should be done: but, if his friends do not love him well enough to secure him at least £100 a year, one way or other, the world is worse than I thought it.

You do not say whether you have seen Sharon Turner. That introduction was the best I could give you, because I think it would give you a friend. You could not fail to esteem and love Turner when you knew him. He is the happiest man I have ever known; and that could not be the case if he were not a very wise as well as a very good one.—God bless you!

R. Southey.

81. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Jan. 4, 1812.

My dear Grosvenor,—Concerning Whitbread, I believe, in every instance, the text of his speech will justify the comment. You have heard of taking the wrong sow by the ear: he had better take a wild boar by the ear than haul me up to London upon this

quarrel. I should tell him it was true that I had said his speeches were translated into French, and circulated through all the departments of France, but I had not said—what has since come to my knowledge—that, when they were thus circulated, nobody believed them genuine; nobody believed it possible that such speeches could have been uttered by an Englishman. I should ask the House (that is, his side of the House; and, of course, in that *humble* language becoming a person at the bar) at what time they would be pleased to let their transactions become matter for history; and I should give the party a gentle hint not to delay that time too long, for reputations, like everything else, find their level; and if he, and such as he, do not get into history soon, they may run a risk of not getting into it at all. I should speak of the situation in which Spain and England stand to each other, and contrast my own feelings with those which he has continually expressed. I should appeal to the whole tenour of the book whether the design of the writer was to vilify Parliament, or to bring the Government into contempt. And, as an Englishman, a man of letters, and an historian, I should claim my privileges.

Phillidor has made his appearance, and shall be returned in the first parcel, with the reviewal of *Azara*. Out of pure conscience, I have promised Gifford to take all these South American travellers myself, because I cannot bear that the *Edinburgh* should gain credit upon this subject, when I am so much better versed in it than any other man in England possibly can be. I am heartily glad the state of South America is in Blanco's hands; it will be highly useful to the *Review*, and, I hope, to himself also; for he works hard, with little benefit, and, when he has once tried his strength in the *Review*, it will not be difficult to find other appropriate subjects for him. I have a high respect for this man's moral and intellectual character, and earnestly wish it were possible to obtain a pension, which never could be more properly bestowed. Canning has smitten the *Quarterly* with a dead palsy upon the

Catholic Question, or else Blanco could supply such an exposition upon that subject as would entitle him to anything that Mr. Perceval could give.

Here is a man at Keswick, who acts upon me as my own ghost would do. He is just what I was in 1794. His name is Shelley, son to the member for Shoreham; with £6,000 a year entailed upon him, and as much more in his father's power to cut off. Beginning with romances of ghosts and murder, and with poetry at Eton, he passed, at Oxford, into metaphysics; printed half a dozen pages, which he entitled *The Necessity of Atheism*; sent one anonymously to Coplestone, in expectation, I suppose, of converting him; was expelled in consequence; married a girl of seventeen, after being turned out of doors by his father; and here they both are, in lodgings, living upon £200 a year, which her father allows them. He is come to the fittest physician in the world. At present he has got to the Pantheistic stage of philosophy, and, in the course of a week, I expect he will be a Berkeleyan, for I have put him upon a course of Berkeley. It has surprised him a good deal to meet, for the first time in his life, with a man who perfectly understands him, and does him full justice. I tell him that all the difference between us is that he is nineteen, and I am thirty-seven; and I dare say it will not be very long before I shall succeed in convincing him that he may be a true philosopher, and do a great deal of good, with £6,000 a year; the thought of which troubles him a great deal more at present than ever the want of sixpence (for I have known such a want) did me. God help us! the world wants mending, though he did not set about it exactly in the right way.—God bless you, Grosvenor!

R. S.

82. To Neville White

Keswick, Feb. 28, 1812.

My dear Neville,—It will not be long before I hope to send you my *Origin, &c., of the New System of Education*, which I think will convince you that Lan-

caster is a vulgar-minded plagiarist, and a liar of the foulest kind. The good which he has done is very great, but it is pretty much in the way that the devil has been the cause of Redemption. His cause was taken up by the insidious enemies of the Church; the beauty of the principle which he had stolen was so manifest, and its power so great, in spite of all that he has done to adulterate and disguise it, that it enables them to attach a very general interest to the subject; and the manner in which this was made an engine against the Church has at last frightened the clergy into doing their duty, which I verily believe no other means would have effected. The Bishop of Durham is a noble exception to the abominable indifference which they displayed for more than ten years. As for Dr. Bell, he has been, and is, as much an enthusiast in this pursuit, as Clarkson has been respecting the slave trade, and is to me, who know both the men, not less an object of respect and reverence. Herbert Marsh's sermon very ably and clearly shows in what manner the new system upon the Lancastrian scheme must needs operate to undermine the Church Establishment. It is, in reality, a self-evident absurdity to affirm that it is not the duty of the State to see that national education be conducted upon the principle of the national religion. Do not misunderstand me; my meaning is, that in parochial schools, which I want to see established at the public expense over all England, the Church Catechism ought to be taught, and no substitute for it; because this is known and approved, and what may be substituted we know not, and we do know that *nothing* can be devised more conformable to the doctrines of the Church of England. This would exclude none of the orthodox dissenters, except the Baptists; and those whom it would exclude may have schools of their own. The dissenters who are not orthodox (Quakers, Arians, and Socinians) have no poor to stand in need of gratuitous education. Neither have the Baptists many. But if for these few it be thought right and liberal to abstain from making

any portion of the established creed a part of primary education, it must of necessity be much more so to exclude Christianity altogether. It then makes room for the Jews, who have many poor. To say that religious instruction may be left to the parents is absurd; the poor have not the leisure for this, even if they had the requisite knowledge and ability. Neither ought it to be left to the clergyman: he has duties enough without it. But if it be made a part of education, it is impossible not to draw the line of exclusion somewhere.

I wish Herbert Marsh had let the Bible Society alone. He is right in his feeling; but the way to have done what he proposes should have been to have set on foot a Prayer Book Society also. Clarke's reply to him is below contempt; but even the scurrility of such an opponent as this will not prevent the controversy from doing mischief.—God bless you. R. S.

83. To C. W. W. Wynn

Keswick, April 15, 1812.

My dear Wynn,—What a number of recollections crowd upon me when I think of ——! Of all our school companions, how very few of them are there whose lots in life have proved to be what might have been expected for them. You and Bedford have gone on each in your natural courses, and are to be found just where and what I should have looked to find, if I had waked after a Nourjahad sleep of twenty years. The same thing might be said of me, if my local habitation were not here at the end of the map. I am leading the life which is convenient for me, and following the pursuits to which, from my earliest boyhood, I was so strongly predisposed. A less troubled youth would probably have led to a less happy manhood. I should have thought less and studied less, felt less and suffered less. Now, for all that I have felt and suffered, I know that I am the better; and God knows that I have yet much to think, and to study, and to do. It is now eighteen

years since you and I used to sit till midnight over your claret in Skeleton Corner—half your life and almost half mine. During that time we have both of us rather grown than changed, and accident has had as little to do with our circumstances as with our character.

Your godson, Herbert, who is just old enough to be delighted with the *Old Woman of Berkeley*, tells me he means, when he is a man, to be a poet like his father. It will be time enough ten years hence, if we live so long, to take thought as to what he shall be; the only care I need take at present, is, what should be done, in case of my death, for the provision of my family. I have insured my life for £1,000. I had calculated upon my copyrights as likely to prove valuable when it would become the humour of the day to regret me; but to my great surprise, I find the booksellers interpret the terms of their taking the risk and sharing the profit as an actual surrender to them of half the property in perpetuity. Townsend, the traveller, who was as much deceived in this case as I have been, was about to try the point with them. I know not what prevented him. This is a flagrant and cruel injustice. If I live, and preserve my health and faculties, I have no doubt of realizing a decent competency in twenty years; but twenty years is almost as much as my chances of life would be reckoned at in tables of calculation.

One thing which I will do, whenever I can afford leisure for the task, will be, to write and leave behind me my own Memoirs: they will contain so much of the literary history of the times, as to have a permanent value on that account. This would prove a good *post obit*, for there can be no doubt I shall be sufficiently talked of when I am gone.

Such are my ways and means for the future; but if I should not live to provide more than the very little which is already done, then, indeed, the exertion of some friends would be required. An arrangement might be made with Longman to allow of a subscrip-

tion edition of my works: this would be productive in proportion to the efforts that were used. I should hope, also, in such a case, that the continuance of my pension might be looked for from either of the present parties in the state, through Perceval, or Canning, or yourself.

This is a sort of testamentary letter. It is fit there should be one; and to whom, my dear Wynn, could it so properly be addressed? By God's blessing, I may yet live to make all necessary provision myself. My means are now improving every year. I am up the hill of difficulty, and shall very soon get rid of the burthen which has impeded me in the ascent. I have some arrangements with Murray, which are likely to prove more profitable than any former speculations; and should I succeed in obtaining the office which the old Frenchman fills at present so properly—and which is the only thing for which I have the slightest ambition—it would soon put me in possession of the utmost I could want or wish for, inasmuch as I could lay by the whole income, and the title would be, in a great degree, productive.

Hitherto I have been highly favoured. A healthy body, an active mind, and a cheerful heart are the three best boons nature can bestow; and, God be praised, no man ever enjoyed them more perfectly. My skin and bones scarcely know what an ailment is, my mind is ever on the alert, and yet, when its work is done, becomes as tranquil as a baby; and my spirits invincibly good. Would they have been so, or could I have been what I am, if you had not been for so many years my stay and support? I believe not; yet you had been so long my familiar friend, that I felt no more sense of dependence in receiving my main, and at one time sole, subsistence from you, than if you had been my brother: it was being done to as I would have done.

R. S.

84. To Walter Savage Landor

Keswick, April 16, 1812.

My dear Landor,—Heaven forbid that you should draw upon yourself the vexations of a printing establishment, which would involve you in trouble without end, and for no adequate purpose—scarcely, indeed, for any purpose! It will be perfectly easy for you to tell the public all which you wish to tell them, with perfect security for yourself, your printer, and publisher, provided only that you bear in mind what the laws of libel are. With regard to individuals, they give sufficient scope: all may be said of them that ought to be said. With regard to the State, anything may be said, which does not bear evident intention of a wish to overthrow it. Above all that you have to beware of is, that the vehemence of your manner do not belie your intentions.

There is no difference in the end at which you and I are aiming, but a good deal in the means. Earl Wellington is in his place. He is what nature meant him to be—a soldier, likely to do greater things than Marlborough. If he be not prevented by a cowardly faction in this country, he will beat down the power of France, and England and Spain will give the law to Europe. But as for establishing him on the throne of Portugal, Heaven forfend! not that the thing should be done, which is impossible, but that you should wish it to be done. In the first place, the Portuguese would not submit to a heretic, and in the second, there are better things in store for Portugal. By one of two possible events, Portugal has at this time the prospect of being united with Spain by the death of Ferdinand and his brother, or their contracting any alliance with France (both sufficiently probable), in which case the succession devolves upon the Princess of Brazil; or if the tide of opinion should take a Republican direction, and the whole Peninsula form itself into a great federal commonwealth—the form of polity which seems to be

the best attainable in our present state. This is far less likely than the former means: either of them would effect the union of, without any sacrifice of pride or privilege on the part of, the weaker state.

For the mother-country I feel nothing but hope, and for the colonies I see nothing but a series of evils. My notions of colonial policy may be summarily stated. It is as necessary for a flourishing country to send out colonies, as it is for a hive to send out swarms; but no modern Government has ever proceeded wisely in the business. With the Cape and New Holland, for instance, I would proceed thus: 'Govern yourselves, and we will protect you as long as you need protection; when that is no longer necessary, remember that though we be different countries, each independent, we are one people. Every Briton who sets foot among you shall instantly be entitled to all the privileges of a nation: every person born among you becomes as an Englishman when he lands in Great Britain. Every country in which English is the mother-tongue shall be open to every member of the great English race.' In fifty years America would petition to be received back into the family.

You rate the American Spaniards too highly. I have just gone through Humboldt's *Mexico*, and I had before perused the *Mercurio Peruano*. They have all the superstitions, all the immorality of the European Spaniards, and some vices of their own to boot, which necessarily arises wherever there is a distinction of castes. In the most flourishing of the Spanish colonies there are three high parties—the Europeans and Creoles, who hate each other; the Indians, who hate both, and outnumber both. In Buenos Ayres the Europeans and the Indians are both weak to what they are in all the other kingdoms, and yet we see what barbarous bloodshed has taken place. Peru may be unbarbarized—made worse than it was under the Incas by the victory of the Indians; Mexico may become the theatre of long and obstinate wars; Miranda may introduce the French into Venezuela—each of these things is but

too likely to take place. My language to the colonies would be: 'Ask little from the mother-country at such a season as this;' to the mother-country, 'Grant everything to the colonies.' In fact, a reform at home insures a reform abroad, and it is as cruel as it is unjust in the Americans to visit upon regenerate Spain the sins committed by the old Adam of her Government.

Did you ever see Cotton Mather's *History of New England*? one of the oddest books I ever perused, but deeply interesting. A history of a country given in the succession of *preachers*, instead of princes. It was, indeed, a genuine Priest-archy—a word which, for the very uncouthness of its mongrel shape, fits the subject the better. Half the Anglo-Americans went over red-hot from the conventicle, the other half flagrant from Bridewell—the *tertium quid*, was the roguery of the one side, superinduced upon the hard vulgarity of the other.

Once more, do not involve yourself with a press. Its cold lead is more perilous than cold iron. I am slow in my progress with *Pelayo*—only 200 lines since the last portion. However, I look to the end of another book ere long.

Remember us to Mrs. Landor.—God bless you.

R. S.

85. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, May 14, 1812.

Dear Grosvenor,—In spite of myself I have been weeping; this has relieved the throbbings of my head; but my mind is overcharged and must pour itself out. I am going to write something upon the state of popular feeling, which will probably appear in the *Courier*, where it will obtain the readiest and widest circulation. Enough to alarm the people I shall be able to say; but I would fain alarm the Government, and if this were done in public they would think it imprudent, and, indeed, it would be so.

I shall probably begin with what you say of the sensation occasioned by this most fatal event, and

then give the reverse of your account as I have received it from Coleridge; what he heard in a pot-house into which he went on the night of the murder, not more to quench his thirst than for the purpose of hearing what the populace would say. Did I not speak to you with ominous truth upon this subject in one of my last hasty letters? This country is upon the brink of the most dreadful of all conceivable states—an insurrection of the poor against the rich; and if, by some providential infatuation, the Burdettites had not continued to *insult* the soldiers, the existing government would not be worth a week's purchase, nor any throat which could be supposed to be worth cutting, safe for a month longer.

You know, Grosvenor, I am no aguish politician, nor is this a sudden apprehension which has seized me. Look to what I have said of the effect of Mrs. Clarke's business upon the public in the last year's *Register*, and look to the remarks upon the tendency of manufactures to this state in *Espriella*, written five years ago. Things are in that state at this time that nothing but the army preserves us: it is the single plank between us and the red sea of an English Jacquerie,—a Bellum Servile; not provoked, as both those convulsions were, by grievous oppression, but prepared by the inevitable tendency of the manufacturing system, and hastened on by the folly of a besotted faction, and the wickedness of a few individuals. The end of these things is full of evil, even upon the happiest termination; for the loss of liberty is the penalty which has always been paid for the abuse of it. But we must not now employ our thoughts upon the danger of our own victory, there is but too much yet to be done to render the victory certain.

The first step should be the immediate renewal of associations for the protection of our lives and properties, and of the British constitution; with the re-establishment to the utmost possible extent of the volunteers—as effective a force against a mob of united Englishmen as they would be inefficient in the

first shock of an invasion. This may be safely said and pressed upon the Government and the people; what I dare not say publicly, is that there is yet danger from the army—that horrid flogging, for the abolition of which Burdett has been suffered to appear as the advocate! Oh that Perceval had prevented this popularity, by coming forward himself as the soldier's friend! He has good works enough for his good name, as well as for his soul's rest; but this would have remained for his colleagues and for the country.

This of course cannot be touched upon immediately, for it would be too obviously an act of fear; but if I knew the ministers, I would urgently press upon them the wisdom of granting some boon to the soldiers—something which, at little cost to the nation, would yet come home to the feelings of every individual in the army. The mere institution of honorary rewards would do this—fifty pounds in copper medals would go further than as many thousands in bounties towards recruiting it hereafter. But I would couple it with something more; for instance, ten or twenty of the oldest men, or oldest soldiers, in every regiment which distinguished itself in the two late assaults, should have their discharge, with full pay for life, or an increase of pay if they chose to serve on. Do not think that these things are inefficacious or beneath the notice of statesmen. Why is it that poets move the heart of men, but because they understand the feelings of men, and it is by their feelings that they may be best governed? Look at the agitators; they address themselves to the passions of the mob, and who does not perceive with what tremendous effect!

I wish you would read this to Gifford or to Herries, because I am sure that these cheap and easy measures would go far toward winning the affections of the soldiers at these perilous times. Other topics I shall speak of elsewhere—the establishment of a system of parochial education, and the necessity of colonial schemes as opening an issue in the distempered body

politic. This will be for the *Quarterly*. Vigorous measures, I trust in God, will be taken while the feelings of the sound class are in a state to favour them. This murder, though committed publicly by a madman, has been made the act and deed of the populace. Shocking as this appears, so it is and so it must be considered. With timely vigour, the innocent blood which has been shed may prove an acceptable sacrifice and save us; otherwise it is but the opening of the flood-gates.

I thought of poor Herries as soon as I could think of anything. The loss which the country has sustained I can scarcely dare to contemplate. There seems nothing to look to but the Wellesleys, with Canning, Huskisson for Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in all likelihood Sir James Mackintosh, who is sure to take the strongest side, and his talents will make him a powerful support to any party. Yet in this train there seems to follow a long catalogue of dangers: Catholic concessions, and next, by aid of all the admitted enemies of the Church, the sale of tithes to supply the necessities of the Government; a measure which will be as certainly popular as it will be ultimately ruinous to the Church and most fatal to the country. There will be a glorious war to console us; but under such circumstances I shall look to that war with the painful thought that we may be repaid for our services to the Spaniards by finding an asylum in Spain when England will have lost all that our fathers purchased for us so dearly!—God bless you!

R. Southey.

Tell Gifford I shall be ready for him with the French Biography, which will be a sketch of the Revolution, introducing an examination of our own state as tending towards the same gulf. Would to God it were not so well timed! What has passed seems like a dream to me—a sort of nightmare that overlays and oppresses my thoughts and feelings.

86. To the Rev. Herbert Hill

Keswick, May 30, 1812.

Dutens is dead. The first intelligence of this was sent me by Wynn, who had already desired Croker to apply to the Lord Chamberlain, in whose gift the office is. Wynn's report is, that Croker's application had been favourably received; but that Lord Hertford is so mean and so greedy, that it would not surprise him if he gave the office either to one of his own family or to the newspaper-writer who announced Lady Hertford in the corner as the guardian angel of Britain, guiding and directing the Regent.

M. Dutens could never have made his exit at a more unlucky time. I was sure of Mr. Perceval's goodwill, and had the best and readiest access to him. Canning has repeatedly sent me the fairest professions, but he has something else to think of at this moment, supposing those professions to be as sincere as they were gratuitous. I have written to him; but forwarded the letter to Gifford, leaving it at his discretion to deliver it or throw it into the fire, according as he may think a letter at such a time may operate. I have written to Lord Lonsdale, and depend upon his influence, if it can be of any use; and I have also written to Sir George Beaumont, who may very likely be acquainted with Lord Hertford, and who, I am sure, would spare no trouble to serve me. The letters all went off last night. Here the business rests at present, and whether I shall be appointed to that good ship, the Historiographer, or not, Heaven knows! The salary is a nominal £400; that is, £280, after all deductions. And now, having told you all this, the less I think of the matter from this time forth, the better.

The murder of Mr. Perceval is likely to lead to more evil than any other single event could possibly have done. There is now every reason to think the Catholic question will be carried. Its effect in Ireland I take to be this—that the Catholics would rise in rebel-

lion against the Protestants, if the Emancipation (as it is called) were withheld; and that, if it is granted, the Protestants will soon be driven, in self-preservation, to take arms against the Catholics: for a man must be completely ignorant of the spirit of the Romish Church, and of its history also, if he supposes that it will be content with anything short of supremacy, and of exclusive supremacy. As for the Protestant Establishment in Ireland, it is so truly an *Irish* Protestant Establishment, that I could be very well content to see *Requiescat* written upon its monument. But our own would not long survive it.

If Ireland were only to send a dozen or a score of Catholics to Parliament, even their votes might turn the scale upon great questions; hence, they will have great weight with any Minister. But the next Duke of Norfolk will return Catholics for all his boroughs, and you and I know that, if it be supposed possible to bring about the downfall of the heretical Church by increasing the number of Catholic votes in Parliament, money will never be wanting to purchase as many seats as come fairly into the market. With these the dissenting members will all co-operate, the Scotch Presbyterians, and the Scotch dabblers in philosophy. A needy Minister (especially such a man as——) will see an immediate reserve in the tithes, which were looked at by Pitt with a greedy eye. They will be sold like the land-tax, the money funded, and the clergy made directly stipendiary of the Crown, and dependent upon the Crown for any addition to their stipends, when the shifting value of money may render it absolutely necessary. The country gentlemen would joyfully support such a measure, and there can be no doubt that it would at this time be as popular as it would be unjust and pernicious in its consequences.

One immediate consequence would be, that the new Establishment would be put up to sale, as it were, to the lowest bidders; and in another generation, the Methodists would obtain complete possession.

I am perfectly convinced that this country owes more

of its peculiar advantages to its Church than to its Government, and when the one falls the other will not long survive it. The whole prospect is at this time a most gloomy one. We may possibly escape the worst of all horrors by which we are immediately threatened —a war of the poor against the rich; but the prevention requires and renders necessary far greater powers in the hand of Government than I should willingly see trusted to ——. The abuse of liberty has always been punished with the loss of liberty. God grant that we may not find it so in our own case. For my own part, I believe that the proudest days of England are to come, but that her best and happiest days are over; that we shall beat down France in the field, become a mighty military power, and lose our civil and religious freedom. R. S.

PS. Let Turner have Anchieta's *Grammar*, when you have an opportunity.

87. To Captain Southey, R.N.

Keswick, June 17, 1812.

Huzza! Givez vous me joy, my Lord Thomas Sir Admiral. Huzza! I have finished my third volume. Huzza! hay-go, jumpetum-down-derry-down, radderer-to, tadderer-tee, radderer-tadderer-tandoree! Huzza! Aballeboozobanganorribo! By the Lord I have a right to talk nonsense after getting through such a job! Huzza! Aballeboozo! Shake hands with the letter, though you cannot shake hands with me, and give me joy, for I am come to the 'End', the 'Finis' of my third year's *Register*; yea, verily, this very evening have I *Amen'd* the volume. And never was I more glad after a long sermon on a cold day to come to those dear words—'Now to God the Father,' and 'The Peace of God'—words which were for so many years the sweetest to me in the whole Church service, and which I shall love as long as I live. Sarah! don't look grave! 'Tis not a very sinful confession; and in my conscience I believe that you must very often have had

a sneaking kindness for the words yourself. Well, *Esta feita!* to-morrow with fresh spirits to something new, and thus the world goes with me. You may have seen by the newspapers that the old Frenchman is dead, and that he might as well have lived till Doomsday, for any good that has fallen to me by his departure. I had plenty of friends upon the occasion, and plenty of applications were made; but the appointment lay with the chamberlain, and the Prince chose to recommend one of his chaplains; so that good ship the Historiographer is given to Stanier Clarke, a painstaking man, and so far fit for it, but a most extraordinary blockhead, and so far unfit. My comfort is that it is only worth half as much as I was led to expect. Lord Lonsdale applied for me, so did Croker, without my knowledge, and in the most handsome manner he wrote to Lord Liverpool, to Ryder, and to the chamberlain; Scott wrote to Lord Melville. See what a nibble I had, though Stanier Clarke caught the fish. The office will do him more good than he will do the office. Much good may it do him! He is the better for it, and I nothing the worse. I had almost forgotten to say that it produced me a very friendly letter from Canning. Had it been in the power of Ministers I should have had it; but it seems the Prince can choose an historian for himself, and if he never does more ill by choosing amiss, it will be well for him and for old England.

To-morrow I go, tooth and nail, to the *Quarterly*, for the purpose, if possible, of making our men in power see the imminent danger in which our throats are at this moment from the Luddites—the genuine offspring of the dragon's teeth, which Burdett and the Opposition have so long been sowing. Call this a fortnight's work. I know not when Danvers comes; whether with Martha from Liverpool on Saturday next, or a fortnight after her.

Friday.—Most likely Danvers will not be here till he has passed a fortnight at Liverpool, where he was to arrive last Wednesday. Here he will probably stay a week or ten days, and we shall be something less than

a week reaching you. One day to Carlisle, one to Gilsland, one to Newcastle; we shall dine with Losh the next day, if we find him, and perhaps walk on to sleep at Shields, see Tynemouth, cross the Tyne, see Jarrow, and get to Sunderland the fifth day. Perhaps you will meet us at Durham. Of course I shall apprise you of our movements as soon as they are fixed. I hope to leave my cold somewhere upon the road. It is at this time about a month old!

Nelson will now soon go to press. I send off a third part next week, and will make an arrangement for franking the proofs to you.

How comes on the *Argentina*? I must set you to work upon something more to your taste—a volume of Letters upon the West Indies. You must put together all your recollections and memoranda, I will put together my gleanings and thinkings, and so we will make a joint concern.

Love to Sarah, and a kiss to my niece. Kate is arrived at months of discretion enough to enjoy the story of what she calls 'Naughty Green'—being the memorable history of that Johnny Green who threw poor Pussy Cat into the well. It is a great pleasure to me to think that Tommy Stout, who saved the cat upon that occasion, proved a pious and good man, as was to be expected from such an act; for that he was so, I conclude from the nature of the present which he made to Sarah. I never sing the song without thinking of that present (sometimes, indeed, mentioning it in the song); but Sarah, when she looks at the present must not always think of 'Bim, bim, bim, bim, bim, bim, bom bell'.—God bless you. R. S.

PS. I suppose I shall reach Durham in the second week of July.

88. To Miss Barker

Keswick, Nov. 4, 1812.

Senhora!—I am going to abuse you. As for the sin of keeping my pantaloons till I was almost reduced, for want of them, to a state not to be mentioned, let

that be forgiven; but why send the box by coach, making it thereby cost eight shillings for carriage, when by wagon it would have come for half a crown? And, moreover, instead of the North Wiltshire cheese which we brought from Ludlow, and which should have been in the box, lo and behold! you have sent salts enough to last Og, the King of Basan, for his life, even if he were as big as the rabbis tell us, and took physic every Sabbath-day, like old Sir Edward Williams. O my cheese, my cheese! Senhora. It was a present from Mr. Browne, and no doubt it was an excellent cheese, Senhora, and such cheeses are not to be had here for love nor for money. Make inquiry for it, I pray you —it was tied up and had my name on the paper— and send it *by wagon*, to be forwarded *by wagon* from Manchester. A good cheese is too good a thing to be lost, especially by a man who lives in the very worst cheese country in England.

Nov. 6.—I have laughed, Senhora, or rather chuckled heartily, while I was reading your hypothesis concerning *Clarissa*. It is many years (two or three and twenty, I believe), since I read that book, but my remembrance of it is distinct and strong—good proof of the power with which it is written. My own opinion of Richardson is, that for a man of decorous life he had a most impure imagination, and that the immorality of our old drama is far less mischievous than his moral stories of Pamela and Squire Booby (how I like Fielding for making out that name), and of Clarissa.

What I would have said to Mr. Lister is this:— Miss Seward designed that her letters should be published at intervals, till the whole collection should be before the public. Her evident intention was, that *all* which she bequeathed to him should be printed, and that twelve years should elapse before the last portion appeared. Her evident reason for the latter request was, that some persons whose feelings will now be hurt (Col. T. and his wife, for instance) would by that time, in the ordinary course of nature, have followed her to the grave. By publishing only such as he

thought proper, Mr. Constable makes Miss Seward deliver opinions to the public which she modified or retracted in her after letters.

Constable was afraid of Jeffrey about these letters, and for that reason put them into the hands of Mr. Morehead, Jeffrey's brother-in-law, that the selection might be made as agreeable to Gog as possible. Hence, every mention of Jeffrey is left out, and hence, no doubt, the omission of all her best letters to me. Indeed, special care has been taken to keep in all that could injure me, and omit as much as possible of what might serve me. This, however, is for you, not for Mr. Lister.

I wish you could have made for *me* of that marvellous *tree* a little cabinet to hold my manuscripts, about three feet high and proportionably wide, with shelves to hold three tier of MSS., that is to say, two shelves. It may stand at the bottom of the room against the great bookcase.

Dr. Bell is here—the best of all good men. I read him only one sentence of your letter, and he is half in love with you for it. You must know that I am about to reprint my article from the *Quarterly* concerning the new system of education, and to enlarge it. It will put the question at rest for ever, and remain a clear history of the most important invention for the diffusion of knowledge that has ever been made since printing was discovered.

I get on with *Pelayo*, and long to read you a passage from it which not altogether satisfies me. Almost I could resolve upon setting-to some evening, and transcribing the 250 lines, but I am grievously afflicted with business, and have literally more upon my hands than any other three men who ever pursued the trade of the grey goose quill. Whether I shall ever have more leisure, God knows.

Remember that the cheese comes *by wagon—by wagon—by wagon*; and if you have in your shop a brass contrivance to hold a lamp, send it with the other brasses. Make my respects to Sir Edward. Write a little more frequently yourself, Senhora, and then you

may have better reason to complain of me.—God bless you. R. S.

PS. Next week you will have the Imperial Colonel at Teddesley.

If you were to guess these hundred years, you would never guess what I am about to do to-morrow! Nothing less than to draw up instructions with Dr. Bell for a system of education to be introduced into every regiment throughout the army.

89. To Captain Southey, R.N., St. Helen's, Auckland

Keswick, Dec. 30, 1812.

My dear Tom,—I should know that midshipman's name if I saw it, and the name we must have. So I have written to Bedford to learn what *mids* of the *Victory* fell in that action.

You used to speak of the dead lying in shoal water at Copenhagen; there was the boatswain's mate, or somebody, asked for, when he was lying face upward under the stern or somewhere. Tell me the right particulars of this, which is too striking a circumstance to be lost. I believe I am making a most impressive narrative of this battle by your help. Something I remembered from Lintham, something from Ponsonby, to whom I shall walk over and read this chapter in hope of getting some corrections and additions; and a Dane's account printed in English gives me some fine things.

I am such a sad lubber that I feel half ashamed of myself for being persuaded ever even to review the *Life of Nelson*, much more to write one. Had I not been a thorough lubber, I should have remembered half a hundred things worthy of remembrance, which have all been lost, because, though I do indeed know the binnacle from the mainmast, I know little more: tackle and sheets, and tally and belay, are alike to me; and if you ask me about the lee-clue garnets, I can only tell

that they are not the same kind of garnets as are worn in necklaces and bracelets; and so fine facts have been lost, because I did not know where to store them in the ship, or in my recollection-closet upstairs. There is something ridiculous, and something like quackery in writing thus about what I so little understand. I walk among sea terms as a cat does in a china pantry, in bodily fear of doing mischief, and betraying myself; and yet there will come a good book of it, I verily believe.

I have touched your old tyrant, Sir Thomas, gently, but upon the sore place; imputing no blame, but stating every circumstance which makes misconduct an (almost) unavoidable inference.

What was your loss? Tell me all about your guns, and what loss they occasioned. Were they not honeycombed? Were you not saying when you pulled the triggers, 'Here goes the death of six!' This is a thing which would be felt.

Did not Victor distinguish himself that day? I must not mention 'poor Sir Hyde', as he was called, for that day's behaviour; for Sir Hyde had his merits. A jealous man, or a conceited man, would not have let Nelson do anything, and I can perfectly well enter into Domett's feelings when he said, 'Save what you can, Sir Hyde.'

I do not rightly understand you about the spare spars. 'Many would have been saved that were destroyed lying on the booms,' you say. Do you refer to the mere value of the spars thus destroyed, or to the damage also done by the splinters from these spars?

I am taking great pains with this chapter, and great interest in it. Your letter was of main use.

What a miserable thing is this loss of a second frigate to the Americans! Coleridge knew Decatur at Malta, and has often spoken of him in the highest terms. It is a cruel stroke; and though their frigates are larger ships than ours, must be felt as disgrace, and in fact *is* disgrace. It looks as if there was a dry rot in our wooden walls. Is it that this captain also is a youngster

hoisted up by interest, or that the Americans were manned by Englishmen, or that our men do not fight heartily, or that their men are better than ours ?

The paragraph about Coleridge's tragedy is correct. It is the play which he wrote in 1797, and which Sheridan then rejected. I think it will succeed.

I have written to Sister Anne earnestly enough, but probably to little effect.

Herbert has been reading the *Pilgrim's Progress*, taking infinite delight in the letter, but no great edification from the spirit, as Mary will conclude, when she hears that his favourite amusement at present is to what he calls play Apollyon with Bertha and Kate. He goes about the room or the passages roaring towards them like a lion seeking whom he may devour ; and Kate and bluff Queen Henry cry out, ' Don't *Pollyon*, don't *Pollyon* Herby ! ' though when he has done they ask him ' to *Pollyon* again '.

Supposing the action had not been suspended when it was, were not you with the *Russell* and the *Desirée* in danger ? The great book here says that there those ships were not ; but I think I remember otherwise from you.

Robertson and *Boyar Edward* I knew must be in the Newcastle library, but it was better you should have them at hand ; the latter indeed will last you throughout the whole of your *Opus*. I wish you had the *Naval Chronicle*, but it is too expensive to be bought, and whenever you meet with a volume, it may soon be gutted of all that is to your purpose. I shall look out for books for you when I go to London, especially for *Du Testre*.—God bless you. R. S.

90. To John May

Keswick, Jan. 3, 1813.

My dear Friend,—Many happy new years to you, and may those which are to come prove more favourable to you in worldly concerns than those which are past ! I have been somewhat unwell this Christmas ; first

with a cold, then with a sudden and unaccountable sickness, which, however, has not returned, and I now hope I have been physicked into tolerable order. The young ones are going on well: little Isabel thrives, your god-daughter is old enough to figure at a Christmas dance, and Herbert will very soon be perfect in the regular Greek verb. A Testament is to come for him in my next parcel, and we shall begin upon it as soon as it arrives. No child ever promised better, morally and intellectually. He is very quick of comprehension, retentive, observant, diligent, and as fond of a book and as impatient of idleness as I am. Would that I were as well satisfied with his bodily health; but in spite of activity and bodily hilarity, he is pale and puny: just that kind of child of whom old women would say that he is too clever to live. Old women's notions are not often so well founded as this; and, having this apprehension before my eyes, the uncertainty of human happiness never comes home to my heart so deeply as when I look at him. God's will be done! I must sow the seed as carefully as if I were sure that the harvest would ripen. My two others are the most perfect contrast you ever saw. Bertha, whom I call Queen Henry the Eighth, from her likeness to King Bluebeard, grows like Jonah's gourd, and is the very picture of robust health; and little Kate hardly seems to grow at all, though perfectly well,—she is round as a mushroom-button. Bertha, the bluff queen, is just as grave as Kate is garrulous; they are inseparable play-fellows, and go about the house hand in hand. Shall I never show you this little flock of mine? I have seen almost every one of my friends here except you, than whom none would be more joyfully welcomed.

I shall have two interesting chapters in this volume for 1811,[1] upon Sicily and South America. My *Life of Nelson*, by a miscalculation, which lies between Murray and the printer, will appear in two volumes instead of one, which will materially, beyond all doubt, injure the sale. Murray has most probably ordered a large im-

[1] *Edinburgh Annual Register.*

pression, calculating upon its going off as a midshipman's manual, which design is thus prevented. If, however, this impression can pass off, I shall have no fear of its answering his purpose when printed in a suitable form; for though the subject was not of my own choice, and might be reasonably thought to be out of my proper line, I have satisfied myself in the execution far more than I could have expected to do. The second sheet of the second volume is now before me. I have just finished the battle of Copenhagen, which makes an impressive narrative. Two chapters more will complete it, and I hope to send you the book by the beginning of March. My labour with it will be completed much before that time, probably in ten days or a fortnight; and then the time which it now occupies will be devoted to the *indigesta moles* of Mr. Walpole's papers. I find the day too short for the employment which it brings; however, if I cannot always get through what is before me as soon as could be wished, in process of time I get through it all. My poem [1] comes on well; about 2,700 lines are written; the probable extent is 5,000; but the last half is like going down hill—the difficulty is over, and your progress accelerates itself. The poem is of a perfectly original character. What its success may be I cannot guess.—Yours, very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

91. To WALTER SCOTT

Keswick, Jan. 13, 1813.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—I received *Rokeby* on Monday evening, and you need not be told that I did not go to bed till I had read the poem through. It is yours all over, and, like all its brethren, perfectly original. I have only to congratulate you upon its appearance, upon its life and spirit, and (with sure and certain anticipation) upon its success. Let me correct an error in your last note, in time for the second edition. Robin

[1] *Roderick, the last of the Goths.*

the Devil lived not upon one of our islands, but on Curwen's in Winandermere, which then belonged to the Philipsons'. You may find the story in Nicholson and Burns' *History of Westmoreland*, pp. 185–6.

I enjoyed your poem the more, being for the first time able to follow you in its scenery. My introduction at Rokeby was a very awkward one; and if the old woman who would not let me through the gate till I had promised her to call at the house had been the porter or the porter's wife on the day of your story, Edmund might have sung long enough before he could have got in. However, when this awkwardness was over, I was very much obliged to her for forcing me into such society, for nothing could be more hospitable or more gratifying than the manner in which I and my companions were received. The glen is, for its extent, more beautiful than anything I have seen in England. If I had known your subject, I could have helped you to some Teesiana for your description—the result of the hardest day's march I ever yet made. For we traced the stream from its spring-head, on the summit of Crossfell, about a mile from the source of the Tyne, all the way to Highforce.

In the course of next month I hope you will receive my *Life of Nelson*, a subject not self-chosen—and out of my way, but executed *con amore*. Some of my periodical employment I must ere long relinquish, or I shall never complete the great historical works upon which so many years have been bestowed, in which so much progress has been made, and for which it is little likely that any other person in the country will ever so qualify himself again. Yonder they are lying unfinished, while I suffer myself to be tempted to other occupations of more immediate emolument indeed, but, in all other respects, of infinitely less importance. Meanwhile time passes on, and I who am of a short-lived race, and have a sense of the uncertainty of life more continually present in my thoughts and feelings than most men, sometimes reproach myself for not devoting my time to those works upon which my

reputation, and perhaps the fortunes of my family, must eventually rest, while the will is strong, the ability yet unimpaired, and the leisure permitted me. If I do not greatly deceive myself, my *History of Portugal* will be one of the most curious books of its kind that has ever yet appeared—the matter is in itself so interesting, and I have hunted out so much that is recondite, and have so much strong light to throw upon things which have never been elucidated before.

Remember us to Mrs. Scott, and believe me,—My dear brother bard, Yours most truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

92. TO NEVILLE WHITE

Keswick, Jan. 25, 1813.

MY DEAR NEVILLE,—Before I say anything of my own doings, let me rejoice with you over these great events in the North. Never in civilized Europe had there been so great an army brought together as Bonaparte had there collected, and never was there so total and tremendous a destruction. I verily think that this is the fourth act of the Corsican, and that the catastrophe of the bloody drama is near. May his fall be as awful as his crimes! The siege of Dantzic, and the accession of Prussia to our alliance, will, probably, be our next news. Saxony will be the next government to emancipate itself, for there the government is as well disposed as the people. I wish I could flatter myself that Alexander were great enough to perform an act of true wisdom as well as magnanimity, and re-establish Poland, not after the villanous manner of Bonaparte, but with all its former territory, giving up his own portion of that infamously acquired plunder, and taking Prussia's part by agreement, and Austria's by force; for Austria will most likely incline towards the side of France, in fear of Russia, and in hatred of the House of Brandenburgh. May this vile power share in his overthrow and destruction, for it has cursed Germany too long!

Was there ever an infatuation like that of the party in this country who are crying out for peace? as if this country had not ample cause to repent of having once before given up the vantage ground of war, at a peace forced upon the state by a faction! Let us remember Utrecht, and not suffer the Whigs of this day to outdo the villany of the Tories of that. There can be no peace with Bonaparte, none with France, that is not dictated at the edge of the sword. Peace, I trust, is now not far distant, and one which France must kneel to receive, not England to ask.

The opening of the Baltic will come seasonably for our manufactures, and, if it set the looms to work again, we may hope that it will suspend the danger which has manifested itself, and give time for measures which may prevent its recurrence. You will see in the next *Quarterly* a paper upon the State of the Poor—or, rather, the populace—wherein I have pointed out the causes of this danger, and its tremendous extent, which, I believe, few persons are aware of. I shall be sorry if it be mutilated from any false notions of prudence. It may often be necessary to keep a patient ignorant of his real state, but public danger ought always to be met boldly, and looked in the face. I impute the danger to the ignorance of the poor, which is the fault of the State, for not having seen to their moral and religious instruction; to the manufacturing system, acting upon persons in this state of ignorance, and vitiating them; and to the Anarchist journalists (Cobbett, Hunt, &c.) perseveringly addressing themselves to such willing and fit recipients of their doctrines.

In the last number I reviewed D'Israeli's *Calamities of Literature*, the amusing book of a very good-natured man.

The poem goes on slow and sure. Twenty years ago nothing could equal the ardour with which I pursued such employments. I was then impatient to see myself in print: it was not possible to long more eagerly than I did for the honour of authorship. This

feeling is quite extinct; and, allowing as much as may be allowed for experience, wiser thoughts, and, if you please, satiety in effecting such a change, I cannot but believe that much must be attributed to a sort of autumnal or evening tone of mind, coming upon me a little earlier than it does upon most men. I am as cheerful as a boy, and retain many youthful or even boyish habits; but I am older in mind than in years, and in years than in appearance; and, though none of the joyousness of youth is lost, there is none of its ardour left. Composition, where any passion is called forth, excites me more than it is desirable to be excited; and, if it were not for the sake of gratifying two or three persons in the world whom I love, and who love me, it is more than probable that I might never write a verse again. God bless you!—Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

93. To MRS. SOUTHEY

Streatham, Sunday, Sept. 5, 1813.

MY DEAR EDITH,—One of the letters which you forwarded was from James Ballantyne; my business in that quarter seems likely to terminate rather better than might have been expected. I wish you had opened the other, which was from Scott. It will be easier to transcribe it than to give its contents; and it does him so much honour that you ought to see it without delay.—'My dear Southey,—On my return home I found, to my no small surprise, a letter tendering me the laurel vacant by the death of the poetical Pye. I have declined the appointment as being incompetent to the task of annual commemoration; but chiefly as being provided for in my professional department, and unwilling to incur the censure of engrossing the emolument attached to one of the few appointments which seems proper to be filled by a man of literature who has no other views in life. Will you forgive me, my dear friend, if I own I had you in my recollection? I have given Croker the hint, and other-

wise endeavoured to throw the office into your *choice* (this is not Scott's word, but I cannot decipher the right one). I am uncertain if you will like it, for the laurel has certainly been tarnished by some of its wearers, and, as at present managed, its duties are inconvenient and somewhat liable to ridicule. But the latter matter might be amended, and I should think the Regent's good sense would lead him to lay aside these biennial commemorations; and as to the former point, it has been worn by Dryden of old, and by Warton in modern days. If you quote my own refusal against me, I reply, first, I have been luckier than you in holding two offices not usually conjoined. Secondly, I did not refuse it from any foolish prejudice against the situation, otherwise how durst I mention it to you my elder brother in the muse? but from a sort of internal hope that they would give it to you, upon whom it would be so much more worthily conferred. For I am not such an ass as not to know that you are my better in poetry, though I have had (probably but for a time) the tide of popularity in my favour. I have not time to add ten thousand other reasons, but I only wished to tell you how the matter was, and to beg you to think before you reject the offer which I flatter myself will be made you. If I had not been, like Dogberry, a fellow with two gowns already, I should have jumped at it like a cock at a gooseberry. Ever yours most truly, W. S.'

I thought this was so likely to happen, that I had turned the thing over in my mind in expectation. So as soon as this letter reached me, I wrote a note to Croker to this effect—that I would not write odes as boys write exercises, at stated times and upon stated subjects; but that if it were understood that upon great public events I might either write or be silent as the spirit moved, I should now accept the office as an honourable distinction, which under those circumstances it would become. To-morrow I shall see him. The salary is but a nominal £120; and, as you see, I shall either reject it, or make the title

honourable by accepting it upon my own terms. The latter is the most probable result.

No doubt I shall be the better on my return for this course of full exercise and full feeding, which follows in natural order. By good fortune this is the oyster season, and when in town I devour about a dozen in the middle of the day; so that in the history of my life this year ought to be designated as the year of the oysters, inasmuch as I shall have feasted on them more than in any other year of my life. I shall work off the old flesh from my bones, and lay on a new layer in its place—a sort of renovation which makes meat better, and therefore will not make me the worse. Harry complains of me as a general disturber of all families. I am up first in the house here and at his quarters; and the other morning when I walked from hence to breakfast with Grosvenor, I arrived before anybody except the servants were up. This is as it should be.—God bless you!

R. S.

94. To Mrs. Southey

Tuesday night, Sept. 28, 1813.

My dear Edith,—I have stolen away from a room full of people, that I might spend an hour in writing to you instead of wasting it at the card-table. Sunday I went by appointment to Lord William Gordon, who wanted to take me to see a young lady. Who should this prove to be but Miss Booth; the very actress whom we saw at Liverpool play so sweetly in Kotzebue's comedy of the *Birthday*. There was I taken to hear her recite 'Mary the Maid of the Inn!' and if I had not interfered in aid of her own better sense, Lord W. and her mother and sisters would have made her act as well as recite it. As I know you defy the monster, I may venture to say that she is a sweet little girl, though a little spoilt by circumstances which would injure anybody; but what think you of this old lord asking permission for me to repeat my visit, and urging

me to 'take her under my protection', and show her what to recite, and instruct her how to recite it? And all this upon a Sunday! So I shall give her a book, and tell her what parts she should choose to appear in. And if she goes again to Edinburgh, be civil to her if she touches at the Lakes; she supports a mother and brother, and two or three sisters. When I returned to Queen Anne Street from the visit, I found Davy sitting with the Doctor, and awaiting my return. I could not dine with him to-morrow, having an engagement, but we promised to go in the evening and take Coleridge with us, and Elmsley, if they would go. It will be a party of lions, where the Doctor must for that evening perform the part of Daniel in the lion's den.

I dined on Sunday at Holland House, with some eighteen or twenty persons. Sharp was there, who introduced me with all due form to Rogers and to Sir James Mackintosh, who seems to be in a bad state of health. In the evening Lord Byron came in. He had asked Rogers if I was 'magnanimous', and requested him to make for him all sorts of amends honourable for having tried his wit upon me at the expense of his discretion; and in full confidence of the success of the apology, had been provided with a letter of introduction to me in case he had gone to the Lakes, as he intended to have done. As for me, you know how I regard things of this kind; so we met with all becoming courtesy on both sides, and I saw a man whom in voice, manner, and countenance I liked very much more than either his character or his writings had given me reason to expect. Rogers wanted me to dine with him on Tuesday (this day): only Lord Byron and Sharp were to have been of the party, but I had a pending engagement here, and was sorry for it.

Holland House is a most interesting building. The library is a sort of gallery, 109 feet in length; and, like my study, serves for drawing-room also. The dinner-room is panelled with wood, and the panels emblazoned with coats of arms, like the ceiling of one

room in the palace at Cintra. The house is of Henry the Eighth's time. Good night, my dear Edith.

We had a pleasant dinner at Madame de Stael's, Davy and his wife, a Frenchman whose name I never heard, and the Portuguese ambassador, the Conde de Palmella, a gentlemanly and accomplished man. I wish you had seen the animation with which she exclaimed against Davy and Mackintosh for their notions about peace.—Once more farewell!

R. Southey.

95. To Walter Scott

London, Nov. 5, 1813.

My dear Scott,—If you have not guessed at the reason why your letter has lain ten weeks unanswered, you must have thought me a very thankless and graceless fellow, and very undeserving of such a letter. I waited from day to day that I might tell you all was completed, and my patience was nearly exhausted in the process. Let me tell you the whole history in due order, before I express my feelings towards you upon the occasion. Upon receiving yours I wrote to Croker, saying that the time was passed when I could write verses upon demand, but that if it were understood that, instead of the old formalities, I might be at liberty to write upon great public events or to be silent, as the spirit moved,—in that case the office would become a mark of honourable distinction, and I should be proud of accepting it. How this was to be managed he best knew; for, of course, it was not for me to propose terms to the Prince. When next I saw him he told me that, after the appointment was completed, he or some other person in the Prince's confidence, would suggest to him the fitness of making this reform, in an office which requires some reform to rescue it from the contempt into which it had fallen. I thought all was settled, and expected every day to receive some official communication, but week after week passed on. My head-quarters at this time were at Streatham.

Going one day into town to my brother's, I found that Lord William Gordon, with whom I had left a card on my first arrival, had called three times on me in as many days, and had that morning requested that I would call on him at eleven, twelve, one, or two o'clock. I went accordingly, never dreaming of what this business could be, and wondering at it. He told me that the Marquis of Hertford was his brother-in-law, and had written to him, as being my neighbour in the country,—placing, in fact, the appointment at his (Lord William's) disposal, wherefore he wished to see me to know if I wished to have it. The meaning of all this was easily seen; I was very willing to thank one person more, and especially a good-natured man, to whom I am indebted for many neighbourly civilities. He assured me that I should now soon hear from the Chamberlain's office, and I departed accordingly, in full expectation that two or three days more would settle the affair. But neither days nor weeks brought any further intelligence; and if plenty of employments and avocations had not filled up my mind as well as my time, I should perhaps have taken dudgeon, and returned to my family and pursuits, from which I had so long been absent.

At length, after sundry ineffectual attempts, owing sometimes to his absence, and once or twice to public business, I saw Croker once more, and he discovered for me that the delay originated in a desire of Lord Hertford's that Lord Liverpool should write to him, and ask the office for me. This calling in the Prime Minister about the disposal of an office, the net emoluments of which are about £90 a year, reminded me of the old proverb about shearing pigs. Lord Liverpool, however, was informed of this by Croker; the letter was written, and in the course of another week Lord Hertford wrote to Croker that he would give orders for making out the appointment. A letter soon followed to say that the order was given, and that I might be sworn in whenever I pleased. My pleasure, however, was the last thing to be consulted. After due inquiry

on my part, and some additional delays, I received a note to say that if I would attend at the Chamberlain's office at one o'clock on Thursday, November 4, a gentleman-usher would be there to administer the oath. Now it so happened that I was engaged to go to Woburn on the Tuesday, meaning to return on Thursday to dinner, or remain a day longer, as I might feel disposed. Down I went to the office, and solicited a change in the day; but this was in vain, the gentleman-usher had been spoken to, and a Poet-Laureate is a creature of a lower description. I obtained, however, two hours' grace; and yesterday, by rising by candlelight and hurrying the postboys, reached the office to the minute. I swore to be a faithful servant to the King, to reveal all treasons which might come to my knowledge, to discharge the duties of my office, and to obey the Lord Chamberlain in all matters of the King's service, and in his stead the Vice-Chamberlain. Having taken this upon my soul, I was thereby inducted into all the rights, privileges, and benefits which Henry James Pye, Esq., did enjoy, or ought to have enjoyed.

The original salary of the office was 100 marks. It was raised for Ben Jonson to £100 and a tierce of Spanish canary wine, now wickedly commuted for £26; which said sum, unlike the canary. is subject to income-tax, land-tax, and heaven knows what taxes besides. The whole net income is little more or less than £90. It comes to me as a Godsend, and I have vested it in a life-policy: by making it up £102 it covers an insurance for £3,000 upon my own life. I have never felt any painful anxiety as to providing for my family,—my mind is too buoyant, my animal spirits too good, for this care ever to have affected my happiness; and I may add that a not unbecoming trust in Providence has ever supported my confidence in myself. But it is with the deepest feeling of thanksgiving that I have secured this legacy for my wife and children, and it is to you that I am primarily and chiefly indebted.

To the manner of your letter I am quite unable to

reply. We shall both be remembered hereafter, and ill betide him who shall institute a comparison between us. There has been no race; we have both got to the top of the hill by different paths, and meet there not as rivals but as friends, each rejoicing in the success of the other.

I wait for the levée, and hope to find a place in the mail for Penrith on the evening after it, for I have the Swiss malady, and am home-sick. Remember me to Mrs. Scott and your daughter; and believe me, my dear Scott,—Most truly and affectionately yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

96. To JOHN MAY

Keswick, April 25, 1814.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—If the King of France has any stray *cordon bleu* to dispose of here, Herbert has a fair claim to one, having been the first person in Great Britain who mounted the white cockade. He appeared with one immediately upon the news from Bordeaux, and wore it till the news from Paris.[1] My young ones were then all as happy as paper cockades could make them; and, to our great amusement, all the white riband in Keswick was bought up to follow their example. My own feelings, on the first intelligence, were unlike anything that I ever experienced before, or can experience again. The curtain had fallen after a tragedy of five-and-twenty years. Those persons who had rejoiced most enthusiastically at the beginning of the revolution, were now deeply thankful for a termination which restored things, as nearly as can be, to the state from which they set out. What I said, with a voice of warning, to my own country, is here historically true—that 'all the intermediate sum of misery is but the bitter price which folly pays for repentance'. The mass of destruction, of wretchedness, and of ruin which that revolution has occasioned,

[1] Of the occupation of Paris by the Allied Armies, and the restoration of the Bourbons.

is beyond all calculation. Our conception of it is almost as vague and inadequate as of infinity. This, however, occurred to me at the time less than my own individual history; for I could not but remember how materially the course of my own life had been influenced by that tremendous earthquake, which seemed to break up the great deeps of society, like a moral and political deluge. I have derived nothing but good from it in everything, except the mere consideration of immediate worldly fortune, which is to me as dust in the balance. Sure I am that under any other course of discipline I should not have possessed half the intellectual powers which I now enjoy, and perhaps not the moral strength. The hopes and the ardour, and the errors and the struggles and the difficulties of my early life crowded upon my mind; and, above all, there was a deep and grateful sense of that superintending goodness which had made all things work together for good in my fortunes, and will, I firmly believe, in like manner uniformly educe good from evil upon the great scale of human events.

I fear we shall make a bad peace. Hitherto the people have borne on their governors (I except Prussia, where prince and people have been worthy of each other). The rulers are now left to themselves, and I apprehend consequences which will fall heavy upon posterity, though not, perhaps, upon ourselves. I had rather the French philosophy had left any other of its blessings behind it than its *candour* and its *liberality*. It was very natural that the Emperor of Austria should not choose to have his son-in-law hanged. But here is Alexander breakfasting with Marshal Ney, who, if he had more necks than the Hydra or my Juggernaut, owes them all to the gallows for his conduct in Galicia and in Portugal. Caulincourt is to have an asylum in Russia, and no doubt will be permitted to choose his latitude there. *Candour* is to make us impute all the enormities which the French have committed to Bonaparte. All the horrors, absolutely unutterable as they are, which you know were perpetrated in

Portugal, and which I know were perpetrated in Spain, but which I literally cannot detail in history, because I dare not outrage human nature and common decency by such details,—all these must in *candour* be put out of remembrance. All was Bonaparte's doing, and the most amiable of nations were his victims rather than his agents,—so this most veracious of nations tells us, and so we are to believe. But if the Devil could not have brought about all the crimes without the Emperor Napoleon, neither could the Emperor Napoleon have discharged the Devil's commission without the most amiable of nations to act up to the full scope of his diabolical desires. At present, I admit, our business is to conciliate and consolidate the counter-revolution. But no visitings to Marshal Ney, no compliments to his worthy colleagues, no asylums for the murderers of the Duc d'Enghien. In treating for peace, liberality will not fail to be urged by the French negotiators as a reason for granting them terms which are inconsistent with the welfare of Europe. Alexander is a weak man, though a good one; and our ministers will be better pleased to hear themselves called liberal by the Opposition, than to be called wise by posterity.

R. Southey.

97. To Walter Scott

Keswick, April 27, 1814.

My dear Scott,—Thank God we have seen the end of this long tragedy of five-and-twenty years! The curtain is fallen; and though there is the after-piece of the Devil to Pay to be performed, we have nothing to do with that: it concerns the performers alone. I wish we had been within reach of a meeting upon the occasion; and yet the first feeling was not a joyous one. Too many recollections crowded upon the mind; and the sudden termination putting an end at once to those hopes and fears and speculations which, for many years past, have made up so large a part of every man's intellectual existence, seemed like a change

in life itself. Much as I had desired this event, and fully as I had expected it, still, when it came, it brought with it an awful sense of the instability of all earthly things; and when I remembered that that same newspaper might as probably have brought with it intelligence that peace had been made with Bonaparte, I could not but acknowledge that something more uniform in its operations than human councils had brought about the event. I thought he would set his life upon the last throw, and die game; or that he would kill himself, or that some of his own men would kill him; and though it had long been my conviction that he was a mean-minded villain, still it surprised me that he should live after such a degradation—after the loss, not merely of empire, but even of his military character. But let him live; if he will write his own history, he will give us all some information, and if he will read mine, it will be some set-off against his crimes.

I desired Longman to send you the *Carmen Triumphale.* In the course of this year I shall volunteer verses enough of this kind to entitle me to a fair dispensation for all task work in future. I have made good way through a poem upon the Princess's marriage in the olden style, consisting of three parts—the Proem, the Dream, and L'Envoy; and I am getting on with the series of Military Inscriptions. The conclusion of peace will, perhaps, require another ode; and I shall then trouble Jeffrey with a few more notes. As yet I know nothing more of his reply than what some sturdy friend in the *Times* has communicated to me; but I shall not fail to pay all proper attention to it in due season. He may rest assured that I shall pay all my obligations to him with compound interest. The uses of newspapers will for a while seem flat and unprofitable, yet there will be no lack of important matter from abroad; and for acrimonious disputes at home, we shall always be sure of them. I fear we shall be too liberal in making peace. There is no reason why we should make any cessions for pure generosity.

It is very true that Louis XVIII has not been our enemy; but the French nation has, and a most inveterate and formidable one. They should have their sugar islands, but not without paying for them—and that a good round sum—to be equally divided between Greenwich and Chelsea, or to form the foundation of a fund for increasing the pay of army and navy.

I am finishing *Roderick*, and deliberating what subject to take up next; for as it has pleased you and the Prince to make me Laureate, I am bound to keep up my poetical character. If I do not fix upon a tale of Robin Hood, or a New England story connected with Philip's war, and Goffe the regicide, I shall either go far North or far East for scenery and superstitions, and pursue my old scheme of my mythological delineations. Is it not almost time to hear of something from you? I remember to have been greatly delighted when a boy with *Amyntor* and *Theodora*, and with Dr. Ogilvie's *Rona*. The main delight must have been from the scenes into which they carried me. There was a rumour that you were among the Hebrides. I heartily wish it may be true.

Remember us to Mrs. Scott and your daughter. These children of ours are now growing tall enough, and intelligent enough to remind us forcibly of the lapse of time. Another generation is coming on. You and I, however, are not yet off the stage; and whenever we quit it, it will not be to men who will make a better figure there.—Yours, very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

98. To JAMES WHITE

Keswick, May 2, 1814.

MY DEAR JAMES,—I am glad to hear from Neville that you are improved in health and spirits. What you say of the inconvenience of mathematical studies to a man who has no inclination for them, no necessity for them, no time to spare for acquiring them, and no use for them when they are acquired, is perfectly true;

and I think it was one of the advantages (Heaven knows they were very few) which Oxford used to possess over Cambridge, that a man might take his degree, if he pleased, without knowing anything of the science. A tenth or a fiftieth part of the time employed upon Euclid, would serve to make the undergraduate a good logician, and logic will stand him in good stead, to whatever profession he may betake himself.

Your repugnance to the expense of time which this fatiguing study requires, is very natural and very reasonable; and the best comfort I can offer is to remind you that the time will soon come when you will have the pleasure of forgetting all you have learned. Your apprehensions of deficiency in more important things are not so well founded. The Church stands in need of men of various characters and acquirements. She ought to have some sturdy polemics, equally able to attack and to defend. One or two of these are as many as she wants, and as many as she produces in a generation; she cannot do without them, and yet sometimes they do evil as well as good. Horsley was the militant of the last generation; Herbert Marsh of the present. Next to these stiff canonists and sound theologians, she requires some who excel in the *literae humaniores*, and who may keep up that literary character which J. Taylor, South, Sherlock, Barrow, &c., have raised, and which of late days has certainly declined. Of these a few also are sufficient. There are hardly more than half a dozen pulpits in the kingdom in which an eloquent preacher would not be out of his place. Everywhere else, what is required of the preacher is to be plain, perspicuous, and in earnest. If he feels himself, he will make his congregation feel. But it is not in the pulpit that the minister may do most good. He will do infinitely more by living with his parishioners like a pastor; by becoming their confidential adviser, their friend, their comforter; directing the education of the poor, and, as far as he can, inspecting that of all, which it is not difficult for a man of good sense and gentle disposition to do as an official duty, without

giving it, in the slightest degree, the appearance of officious interference. Teach the young what Christianity is; distinguish by noticing and rewarding those who distinguish themselves by their good conduct; see to the wants of the poor, and call upon the charity of the rich, making yourself the channel through which it flows; look that the schools be in good order, that the workhouse is what it ought to be, that the overseers do their duty; be, in short, the active friend of your parishioners. Sunday will then be the least of your labours, and the least important of your duties; and you will very soon find that the time employed in making a sermon would be better employed in adapting to your congregation a dozen, which your predecessors did not deliver to the press for no other purpose than that they should stand idle upon the shelves of a divinity library. The pulpit is a clergyman's parade, the parish is his field of active service.—Believe me, my dear James, Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

99. To JOHN MAY

July 1, 1814.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Yesterday I received your letter, with its inclosure of £50, a fresh obligation for which I stand indebted to you. Arriving on Thursday, it could not be acknowledged on the same day.

The Chamberlain's office, I perceive, is much more slow in its payments than the Exchequer, where they usually pay one quarter shortly after a second is due. The fees, &c., are within a few shillings of £20, which somewhat exceeds the first quarter of the salary, but there is also the wicked commutation for the sack to be received, payable at another place, which will more than answer the deficiency. This is paid by William Nicol, whom Harry has seen at Bedford's, and from Bedford he will learn when the money may be forthcoming. Have you received the bust yet?

The fault which has been committed about the slave trade arose from the principle upon which we treated,

which appears to me to have been radically wrong. Unquestionably it was a great point to re-establish the Bourbons, and it was good policy to separate the cause of Bonaparte from that of France; this latter point you know I have often endeavoured to enforce. But the French had no merit to plead in deserting their tyrant; their suppleness and their fear made them stand by him to the last, and their capital was in consequence conquered. Blucher was at the gates when they capitulated. France, therefore, had no claim upon the generosity of the allies, but her negotiators, as usual, have been expert at their business, and flattered the crowned heads into an ostentatious display of what is magnanimity between man and man, but folly between nation and nation, under the present circumstances of Europe. Since the days of Louis XIV the power and the ambition of France have been the curse of half the world; there was now an opportunity of repairing the blunders committed at Utrecht, and stripping France of the acquisitions which Louis XIV made. Ministers say that the cessions which we have made were to purchase certain equivalent arrangements on the continent. To this it may be replied that for any arrangements in which we were directly or indirectly concerned, we made an ample equivalent by restoring Gascony, then subject to the British arms. But the real truth is, that terms so favourable to France were granted to render the new Government popular; and that now, as in every former instance, the British negotiators have not fully understood their own strength, nor adequately supported the pride and power of their country. 'Whatever we may restore,' they should have said, 'is on our part a mere gift. You have no equivalent to offer, and no possibility of recovering what you have lost by arms. We will give you your sugar islands, &c., if you will assent to the abolition of the slave trade; if you do not like the condition, so be it—the islands shall remain as they are.' What possible reply could have been made to this?

The evil, however, is not so great in this instance

as the alarm. To prevent the introduction of fresh negroes into our own islands is very practicable, and very easy. No kind of commodity is so difficult, or rather impossible, to be smuggled, if the simple regulation is adopted of making every person register his slaves. There can be no importation to St. Domingo, and the islands which we restore have been long enough in our possession to feel the possibility of advantage of doing without any fresh supply; and demonstrated as the impolicy, as well as the wickedness, of the trade has been, I think there is little reason to doubt that the stipulation in the treaty for its absolute abolishment at the time appointed will be fulfilled, even if it be not affected sooner. There are far greater difficulties to encounter with Spain and Portugal. The Prince cannot attempt it without inevitably losing Brazil. Whether the same consequences would take place in Cuba, I do not know. When you see in my second volume the long and persevering struggles which the Jesuits made against the Indian slave trade, and how ineffectual were all the efforts of the Government and the Church—the latter most zealous in the cause, and with agents the most able and the most virtuous—you will perceive what difficulties are to be encountered in countries where the only alteration which has taken place is in the growth and enlarged commerce of a few widely distant cities.

The good in which the slave trade will terminate seems to me to be that of preparing for those countries in which European constitutions are incapable of that degree of labour which is 'healthful and necessary, as well for the soul as the body', a mixed race, uniting so much of the European mind and African conformation as may render them the fit inhabitants of a tropical climate.

I love to trace the moral order of things in the history of the world. The aborigines (as we call them) of the new world seem to me, with few exceptions, to have been either so far sunk into a savage state, that, upon the great scale of things, they might be considered as

barren fig-trees—to be hewn down: or they were like the Canaanites, some for their vices, and some for their cruelty, worthy of extermination. If the guilt of misery attendant upon such a process be objected, I feel the weight of the objection; but am, at the same time, satisfied that it resolves itself into the great question of the origin of evil: that, comparing it with the good which there is in the world, the evil seems to me as much lost as the filth and impurity of our navigated rivers is in the sea; that what evil there is is temporary as to individuals, and evanescent as to the species, and that a future state sets all to rights. I thought to have said something respecting Norway, and upon the state of things in Spain, but have left myself no room. *Roderick* monopolizes me just now; I am in all the bustle and passion of the catastrophe, and my next, as far as it is possible to forsee anything, will, I trust, inform you of its happy termination.

I hope the sea has entirely removed the whooping cough. God bless you.—Yours, most affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY.

100. To JOSEPH COTTLE

Keswick, Oct. 17, 1814.

MY DEAR COTTLE,—It is not long since I heard of you from De Quincey, but I wish you would let me sometimes hear *from you*. There was a time when scarcely a day passed without my seeing you, and in all that time I do not remember that there ever was a passing coldness between us. The feeling, I am sure, continues; do not, then, let us be so entirely separated by distance, which in cases of correspondence may almost be considered as a mere abstraction.

Longman will send you my poem. It has been printed about two months, but he delays its publication till November, for reasons of which he must needs be the best judge. I am neither sanguine about its early, nor doubtful about its ultimate, acceptation in the world. The passion is in a deeper tone than in

any of my former works; I call it a tragic poem for this reason; and also that the reader may not expect the same busy and complicated action which the term heroic might seem to promise. The subject has the disadvantage of belonging to an age of which little or no costume has been preserved. I was, therefore, cut off from all adornments of this kind, and had little left me to relieve the stronger parts but description, the best of which is from the life.

Can you tell me anything of Coleridge? A few lines of introduction for a son of Mr. ——, of St. James's (in your city), are all that we have received since I saw him last September twelvemonth in town. The children being thus entirely left to chance, I have applied to his brothers at Otley concerning them, and am in hopes through their means, and the aid of other friends, of sending Hartley to College. Lady Beaumont has promised £30 a year for this purpose, Poole £10. I wrote to Coleridge three or four months ago, telling him that unless he took some steps in providing for this object I must make the application, and required his answer within a given term of three weeks. He received the letter, and in his note by Mr. —— promised to answer it, but he has never taken any further notice of it. I have acted with the advice of Wordsworth. The brothers, as I expected, promise their concurrence, and I daily expect a letter, stating to what amount they will contribute.—Believe me, my dear Cottle, Ever your affectionate old friend,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

101. To NEVILLE WHITE

Keswick, Nov. 8, 1814.

MY DEAR NEVILLE,—I was *not* sorry that we did not meet at Ambleside merely to take leave. It is one of those things which, since my schoolboy days, I always avoid when I can; there are but too many of these long good-byes in life; and to one who has experienced in the losses you have sustained that

fearful uncertainty of life which only experience makes us fully feel and understand, they are very painful. Our repast upon Kirkston wore a good face of cheerfulness; but I could not help feeling how soon we were to separate, and how doubtful it was that the whole of the party would ever be assembled together again. After our return Isabel was seized with a severe attack, and was brought to the very brink of the grave. I so verily expected to lose her, that I thought at one moment I had seen her for the last time. There are heavier afflictions than this, but none keener; and the joy and thankfulness which attend on recovery are proportionately intense. She has not yet regained her strength; but every day is restoring her, God be thanked.

I am glad you have seen these children. If, by God's blessing, my life should be prolonged till they are grown up, I have no doubt of providing for them; and if Herbert's life be spared, he has everything which can be required to make his name a good inheritance to him.

O dear Neville! how unendurable would life be if it were not for the belief that we shall meet again in a better state of existence. I do not know that person who is happier than myself, and who has more reason to be happy; and never was man more habitually cheerful; but this belief is the root which gives life to all, and holds all fast. God bless you!—Yours very affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

102. To JAMES WHITE

Keswick, Nov. 11, 1814.

MY DEAR JAMES,—I am grieved to learn from Neville that you are distressing yourself about what I could find in my heart to call these cursed examinations. There are few things of which I am more thoroughly convinced, than that the system of feeding-up young men like so many gamecocks for a sort of intellectual *long-main* is every way pernicious.

University honours are like provincial tokens, not current beyond the narrow limits of the district in which they are coined; and, even where they pass current, they are not the only currency, nor the best. Doubtless there are many men at Cambridge in high repute, who have taken no honours and gained no prizes: and should you yourself stand for a fellowship or take pupils, you will find the opinion of what you *might have done*, will act as well in your favour as if your acquirements had received the seal and stamp of approbation in the Senate House. Content yourself with graduating among the many; and remember that the first duty which you have to perform is that of keeping yourself, as far as it can depend upon yourself, in sound health of body and mind, both for your own sake and for the sake of those who are most dear to you. If I were near you I would rid you of these blue devils. When I was about eighteen I made *Epictetus* literally my manual for some twelvemonths, and by that wholesome course of stoicism counteracted the mischief which I might else have incurred from a passionate admiration of Werter and Rousseau. His tonics agreed with me; and if the old Grecian could know how impassible I have ever since felt myself to the τὰ οὐκ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, he would be well satisfied with the effect of his lessons. It is not your fault that these university distinctions have a local and temporary value, but it is your fault if you do not consider how local and how temporary that value is; and if you suffer yourself to be agitated by any losses and fears concerning what is worth so little. My dear James, in this matter, follow, in the strict interpretation of the words, the advice of Boethius,—

Pelle timorem
Spemque fugato.

Remember that you only want your degree as a passport: content yourself with simply taking it; and if you are disposed to revenge yourself afterwards by burning your mathematical books and instruments,

bring them with you to Keswick when next you make us a visit, and I will assist at the auto-da-fè. We will dine by the side of the Lake, and light our fire with Euclid.

Neville was more fortunate than you in his excursion to this land of loveliness. He had delightful weather, and he made the most of it. Never had we a more indefatigable guest, nor one who enjoyed the country more heartily. Since his return, Neville-like, he has loaded us with presents; and no children were ever happier than these young ones were when the expected box made its appearance. I happened to be passing the evening at the Island with General Peachey when it arrived, and they one and all laid their injunctions upon their mother not to tell me what each had received, that they might surprise me with the sight in the morning. Accordingly, no sooner was my door opened in the morning than the whole swarm were in an uproar, buzzing about me. In an evil moment I had begun to shave myself; before the operation was half over, Edith with her work-box was on one side, Herbert with his books on the other,—Bertha was displaying one treasure, Kate another, and little Isabel, jigging for delight in the midst of them, was crying out *mine—mine—Mitter White*—and holding up a box of Tunbridge ware. My poor chin suffered for all this, and the scene would have made no bad subject for Wilkie or Bird. God bless you!—Your affectionate friend.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

103. To BERNARD BARTON

Keswick, Dec. 19, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR,—You will wonder at not having received my thanks for your metrical effusions; but you will acquit me of all incivility when you hear that the book did not reach me till this morning, and that I have now laid it down after a full perusal.

I have read your poems with much pleasure, those with most which speak most of your own feelings. Have I not seen some of them in the *Monthly Magazine*?

Wordsworth's residence and mine are fifteen miles asunder, a sufficient distance to preclude any frequent interchange of visits. I have known him nearly twenty years, and, for about half that time, intimately. The strength and the character of his mind you see in the *Excursion*, and his life does not belie his writings, for, in every relation of life, and every point of view, he is a truly exemplary and admirable man. In conversation he is powerful beyond any of his contemporaries; and, as a poet,—I speak not from the partiality of friendship, nor because we have been so absurdly held up as both writing upon one concerted system of poetry, but with the most deliberate exercise of impartial judgement whereof I am capable, when I declare my full conviction that posterity will rank him with Milton.

You wish the metrical tales were republished; they are at this time in the press, incorporated with my other minor poems, in three volumes. *Nos haec novimus esse nihil* may serve as motto for them all.

Do not suffer my projected Quaker poem to interfere with your intentions respecting William Penn; there is not the slightest reason why it should. Of all great reputations, Penn's is that which has been most the effect of accident. The great action of his life was his turning Quaker; the conspicuous one his behaviour upon his trial. In all that regards Pennsylvania, he has no other merit than that of having followed the principles of the religious community to which he belonged, when his property *happened* to be vested in colonial speculations. The true champion for religious liberty in America was Roger Williams, the first consistent advocate for it in that country, and, perhaps, the first in any one. I hold his memory in veneration. But, because I value religious liberty, I differ from you entirely concerning the Catholic question, and never would intrust any sect with political power whose doctrines are inherently and necessarily intolerant.—Believe me, Yours with sincere respect,

Robert Southey.

104. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, January 14, 1815.

My dear G.,—I beseech you, try if you can recover the MSS. of Lamb's Review, which has been made the thing it is by Gifford's merciless mutilations. You may remember the old woman at Merida discovering that we had not drawn the woodcock which was for our supper; just like that old woman is Gifford as a corrector of my reviewals, and so has he proved to Lamb. If there be a logical arrangement, he is sure to dislocate it by pulling out the middle joint of every articulated paragraph. If there be a felicitous phrase, he is sure to gouge the sentence. To own the truth, I am too angry to write to him just now, and shall therefore make my reply through you. As for his emasculations, they must be submitted to, and I have never remonstrated against them; but he has no business to insert his own opinions in direct opposition and contradiction to mine. He has said for me, that, as an Englishman, I am proud of the general merits of Pope's *Homer*. The only comfort I have is, that every person must perceive no man who wrote what follows, could possibly have written that sentence, unless he was a stark fool.

He asks what I shall have for him, and this is what I want you to answer for me, till I shall have ceased to remember this unwarrantable and idiotic interpolation: Tell him, he shall have part of *Lewis and Clarke* in the course of a week; and, for the same number, Barré's book, and Miot's *History of the Expedition to Egypt*, of which Murray has sent me the two editions; the latter containing, among many various readings, a circumstantial detail of the massacre at Jaffa, to which he was eyewitness. Tell him, also, that I shall review, if he pleases, Lloyd's *Alfieri*. The necessity of my doing it, as it imports Lloyd's feeling, you will very well understand. This will not be for the next number; but I may, perhaps, do something more for it. You know what makes the mare go, according to the proverb. God bless you. R. S.

105. To Dr. H. H. Southey

Feb. 16, 1815.

My dear Harry,—I have got scent of the squid-hound, for whom I inquired in the *Omniana*. Cartwright heard of a sort of cuttle-fish of this enormous size; there is a beast of this family on the coast of Brazil, which twines its suckers round a swimmer and destroys him; and Langsdorff, who relates this, refers with disbelief to a book, which I wish you would examine for me. In the *Histoire Naturelle des Mollusques, par Denys Montfort*, Paris, An. 10, under the head of Le Poulpe Colossal, there must be an account of a fellow big enough to claw down a large three-masted vessel. Being a modern work of natural history, I dare say the book will be at the Royal Institution, and I pray you to extract the account for me. I shall make use of it in an article about Labrador for the *Quarterly*. Cartwright says, he is told they grow to a most enormous size, as big as a large whale, and he evidently does not disbelieve it. He was not a credulous man, and knew upon what sort of authority he was speaking. The description of the Kraken accords perfectly with this genus. You know, Doctor, that I can swallow a Kraken. You know, also, that I am a mortal enemy to that sort of incredulity which is founded upon mere ignorance.

Several weeks have elapsed since this letter was begun; and in the interim, to my no small satisfaction, I have found one of these monsters dead, and literally floating many a rood. The Frenchman, De Menonville, met with it between the Gulf of Mexico and St. Domingo (see Pinkerton's *Coll.*, vol. xiii, p. 873), and knew not what to make of it.

I have heard from many quarters of Lord Byron's praise, and regard it just as much as I did his censure. Nothing can be more absurd than thinking of comparing any of my poems with the *Paradise Lost*. With Tasso, with Virgil, with Homer, there may be fair grounds of comparison; but my mind is wholly unlike Milton's,

and my poetry has nothing of his imagination and distinguishing character; nor is there any poet who has, except Wordsworth: he possesses it in an equal degree. And it is entirely impossible that any man can understand Milton, and fail to perceive that Wordsworth is a poet of the same class and of equal powers. Whatever my powers may be, they are not of that class. From what I have seen of the minor poems, I suspect that Chiabrera is the writer whom, as a poet, I most resemble in the constitution of my mind. His narrative poems I have never seen.

The sale of *Roderick* is what I expected, neither better nor worse. It is also just what I should desire, if profit were a matter of indifference to me; for I am perfectly certain that great immediate popularity can only be obtained by those faults which fall in with the humour of the times, and which are, of course, ultimately fatal to the poems that contain them. God bless you! R. S.

106. To Neville White

Keswick, May 8, 1815.

My dear Neville,—I had resolved upon writing to you this evening, and, alas! my thoughts are drawn towards you very mournfully by a letter which this post has brought, informing me of poor Dusautoy's death. The fever at Cambridge has proved fatal to him, and he, too, like Henry, rests in the cloister of his own college! You may well suppose that this very much affects me. The poor lad originally wrote to me in consequence of reading Henry's *Remains*. I advised him to a course which, to all human foresight, might have seemed most conducive to his welfare, and that course has led him to an early grave. It would be worse than weakness to feel anything like self-reproach, but it is impossible not to feel something more than an ordinary regret. James will be shocked at this event. I thank God that *he* has escaped this danger, and I pray God the pestilence (for so it may be called)

may not spread. My letter (which is from Tillbrook) says that 'in three days Cambridge, with respect to its colleges, will become an uninhabited desert!' God be merciful to us! How frail a thing is human life! And if this life were all, how unsupportable it would be!

Hartley is by this time at Oxford, and probably settled at Merton. What will his fate be? I hardly dare ask myself the question. He goes with the invaluable advantage of having a cousin in the University old enough to be his adviser, and not too old to be his friend; he takes with him a larger stock of Greek than is often carried to college, a powerful intellect, good principles, and good feelings. But with these he has some dangerous accompaniments; for he is headstrong, violent, perilously disposed to justify whatever he may wish to do, eccentric in all his ways, and willing to persuade himself that there is a merit in eccentricity. But his greatest danger arises from a mournful cause, against which it is impossible to protect, or even to caution him—it arises from his father. Hartley is able to comprehend the powers of his father's mind, and has for it all that veneration which it is both natural and proper that he should feel. The conduct of the father is, of course, a subject on which no one would speak to the son; and Hartley, I believe, contrives to keep it out of his own sight; but if Coleridge should take it in his head to send for the boy to pass any of his vacations with him, there is the most imminent danger of his unsettling his mind upon the most important subjects, and the end would be utter and irremediable ruin. For Coleridge, totally regardless of all consequences, will lead him into all the depths and mazes of metaphysics: he would root up from his mind, without intending it, all established principles; and if he should succeed in establishing others in their place, with one of Hartley's ardour and sincerity, they would never serve for the practical purposes of society, and he would be thrown out from the only profession or way of life for which he is qualified. This you see it is absolutely impossible to prevent. I know but too

well, and Coleridge also knows, what an evil it is to be thus as it were cut adrift upon the sea of life; but experience is lost upon him.

This has been a sickly season; my young ones have all been affected with an endemic cold and cough, from which they are not yet thoroughly recovered, though, thank God, they are recovering. The *Eclectic* has not reached me yet. If the article be written by Montgomery, he has, probably, stated the scope of his objections in a letter which I received from him about a month ago, and which I thought more creditable to the benevolence of his temper than to his judgement. Wordsworth is in town. Have you seen the new edition of his poems? I do not hesitate to say that in the whole compass of poetry, ancient or modern, there is no collection of miscellaneous poems comparable to them, nor any work whatever which discovers greater strength of mind or higher poetical genius.

I am working on in the old horse-in-a-mill way at reviewing, with intervals of worthier employment upon the *Brazilian History*, which is advancing in the press, and of which I have a huge pile of papers beside me. Remember me to Josiah Conder, and tell James that I am ashamed of not having written to him, but will speedily atone for my fault. All here unite in the kindest remembrances to you.—Believe me, my dear Neville, Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

107. To C. W. W. WYNN

Keswick, May 20, 1815.

MY DEAR WYNN,—It is surprising to me that men whose fortunes are not absolutely desperate at home will go to India to seek them; that is, men who have any feelings beyond what is connected with the sense of touch. Fourteen years' transportation is a heavy sentence; Strachey, I think, has been gone seventeen. What a portion of human life is this, and of its best years! After such an absence the pain of returning is

hardly less severe, and perhaps more lasting, than that of departure. He finds his family thinned by death; his parents, if he finds them at all, fallen into old age, and on the brink of the grave; the friends whom he left in youth so changed as to be no longer the same. What fortune can make amends for this! It is indeed *propter vitam vivendi perdere causas!* I grieve to think sometimes that you and I, who were once in such daily habits of intimate intercourse, meet now only at intervals of two or three years; though, besides our communication by letter (too seldom, I *confess*, rather than *complain*), what we do in public serve to keep us in sight of each other. However indifferent may be the matter of the debate, I always look to see if Mr. C. Wynn has spoken. But Strachey must almost feel himself in another world.

I thought that rascal Murat might have done more mischief. The proper termination of his career would be that the Sicilian Bourbons should catch him, and send him to Madrid; and I think Louis the Eighteenth would now be fully justified in sending Prince Joseph to the same place. The contest in France cannot surely be long; if Bonaparte could have acted with vigour on the offensive, he would have found perilous allies in Saxony, and little resistance from the Belgians. But the internal state of France paralyses him; and if he acts on the defensive, he can derive no advantage from the injustice of the great German powers. Two things were wanting last year—the British army did not get to Paris, and the French were neither punished as they deserved, nor humbled as the interests of the rest of the world required. It will, I trust, now be put beyond all doubt that they have been conquered, and that their metropolis has been taken.

The second edition of *Roderick* is selling well. It will probably soon reach to a third, and then fall into the slow steady sale of its predecessors. The sale will become of importance, when by the laws of literary property it will no longer benefit the author in his family. This is an abominable injustice, and will,

I suppose, one day be redressed, but not in our times. I am misemploying much time in reviewing for the lucre of gain, which nothing but filthy lucre should make me do. My *History of Brazil*, however, gets on in the press; and you would be surprised were you to see the materials which I have collected for it. I did not think it right to postpone this second volume till my *History of the Spanish War* was done; for it had already been postponed too long. But it is a considerable sacrifice which I thus have been making. As soon as this work is off my hands I shall be able to put the *History of Portugal* to press without impeding the more profitable work. It is on this that I should wish to rest my reputation. As a poet I know where I have fallen short; and, did I consult only my own feelings, it is probable that I should write poetry no more,—not as being contented with what I have done, but as knowing that I can hope to do nothing better. I might were my whole heart and mind given to it, as they were in youth; but they are no longer at my own disposal. As an historian I shall come nearer my mark. For thorough research, indeed, and range of materials, I do not believe that the *History of Portugal* will ever have been surpassed.

God bless you, my dear Wynn!—Yours very affectionately, R. S.

108. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, June 28, 1815.

My dear G.,—I must tell you a good manœuvre of the Bibliopole's. He proposes to give me fifty guineas if I will amplify the Wellington article a little, annex to it a full account of the late battle, and let him publish it within three weeks in one volume, like the *Life of Nelson* as a *Life of Wellington*, and with my name. Now he knows very well that if he had prima facie proposed to give me £150 for a *Life of Wellington*, I should not have listened to any such proposal. I might with good reason have considered it as a deroga-

tory offer. But because, through my principle of doing things of this kind as well as I can without any reference to price or quantity, he got from me a fair *Life of Nelson* instead of a mere expansion of a paper in his review, and thereby (though he paid me £200 instead of £100, which was the original offer for one volume) got from me for £200 what I certainly would not have sold to him for £500, had the thing been a straightforward business from the beginning—because he has dealt so thrivingly in one instance, he wanted to trepan me into this kind of bargain.

I am not very quicksighted in such things, and might possibly enough have been taken in if other and weightier objections had not instantly occurred to me: such as the emptiness of writing the life of a man before he was dead, and the disrepute which I should incur and deserve by vamping up a book to answer the mere purposes of a bookseller, and supply the demand of the day. To this point my answer was confined, and the Bibliopole will have a very comfortable dream of profit disturbed when he receives it to-morrow. The paper itself is well enough for its place. There was an *excuse* for giving it, because there was a volume upon the subject: there was a *reason*, because of the then impending contest; and the *place* is an excuse for hurrying over the latter part of the Peninsular war which (as far as my present documents go) would not supply materials for *two* narratives.

I preserve almost all my letters; and Murray's are a choice collection. It is impossible that any compositions can be more booksellerish and more Scotchy. The flattery and the hints are both so broad that they would move you to swear, where they move me to smile. Our Fathers which are in the row are Englishmen; and though they might not be perhaps a whit more liberal, they have an English way of doing things. They respect me too much either to flatter me, or give me their advice. I believe they have a sincere respect for me, amounting to something like personal regard, and without any reference to the state of their accounts.

The *Review* has not reached me; nor indeed the number before it; so that I have never seen how the little paper upon Barré looks in print. There is a very injudicious criticism upon *Roderick* in the *Eclectic* written by Montgomery; and there is one in the *British Critic*, which I should like to see, because it is written by John Coleridge (which I believe is a secret; mind you that, Mr. Bedford!). The usual cogent motives will make me work vigorously for the next number.

What a mean villain is this Bonaparte! With all his insolence in prosperity, his only thought in danger is how to save himself! But if there be not thirteen pence halfpenny fairly coming to Mr. Ketch in reversion upon his neck, I should like to know this,—when that worthy officer ever properly earned the like sum. The *Moniteur's* account of the battle is admirable, in the best style of French history—'We had completely defeated them, but unluckily we took flight and ran away, leaving everything behind us.' The cannon should be made into a public monument to those who fell, and a statue of Wellington on the top. The park in front of the H. Guards would be the best place for it,—and the two eagles at his feet. Suggest this to Herries.

I am teased with my summer cold, which is either the cause or the pretext of much listlessness.

Dr. Solomon brought a bride here last week, and Derwent, who was fishing in my boat (the *Royal Noah*), took him off St. Herbert's Island, when he was in dire distress, the boat which had carried him there leaking a little, so that he was afraid to return in it.

I have not seen the *Times*; indeed I see no paper but the *Courier*.—God bless you. R. S.

109. To Dr. H. H. Southey

Keswick, Aug. 23, 1815.

My dear Harry,—According to all form, I ought to write you a letter of congratulation; but some unlucky ingredient in my moral, physical, and intel-

lectual composition has all my life long operated upon me with respect to forms, like that antipathy which some persons feel towards cats, or other objects equally inoffensive. I get through them so badly at all times, that, whenever I am obliged to the performance, my chief concern is, how to slink out of it as expeditiously as possible. I have, moreover, a propensity which may seem at first not very well to accord with that constitutional hilarity which is my best inheritance. Occasions of joy and festivity seem rather to depress the barometer of my spirits than to raise it; birth-days and wedding-days, therefore, pass uncelebrated by me; and with the strongest conviction of the good effects of national holidays, and with a feeling towards them which men, who are incapable of understanding what is meant by the imaginative faculty, might call superstition, I yet wish, if it were possible, that Christmas and New Year's Day could be blotted from my calendar. It might not be difficult to explain why this is, but it would be somewhat metaphysical, which is bad, and somewhat sentimental, which is worse.

Monday, the 21st of August, was not a more remarkable day in your life than it was in that of my neighbour Skiddaw, who is a much older personage. The weather served for our bonfire, and never, I believe, was such an assemblage upon such a spot. To my utter astonishment, Lord Sunderlin rode up, and Lady S., who had endeavoured to dissuade *me* from going as a thing too dangerous, joined the walking party. Wordsworth, with his wife, sister, and eldest boy, came over on purpose. James Boswell arrived that morning at the Sunderlins. Edith, the Senhora, Edith May, and Herbert were my convoy, with our three maid-servants, some of our neighbours, some adventurous Lakers, and Messrs. Rag, Tag, and Bobtail, made up the rest of the assembly. We roasted beef and boiled plum-puddings there; sung 'God save the King' round the most furious body of flaming tar-barrels that I ever saw; drank a huge wooden bowl of punch; fired cannon at every health with three times three, and

rolled large blazing balls of tow and turpentine down the steep side of the mountain. The effect was grand beyond imagination. We formed a huge circle round the most intense light, and behind us was an immeasurable arch of the most intense darkness, for our bonfire fairly put out the moon.

The only mishap which occurred will make a famous anecdote in the life of a great poet, if James Boswell, after the example of his father, keepeth a diary of the sayings of remarkable men. When we were craving for the punch, a cry went forth that the kettle had been knocked over, with all the boiling water! Colonel Barker, as Boswell named the Senhora, from her having had the command on this occasion, immediately instituted a strict inquiry to discover the culprit, from a suspicion that it might have been done in mischief, water, as you know, being a commodity not easily replaced on the summit of Skiddaw. The persons about the fire declared it was one of the gentlemen—they did not know his name; but he had a red cloak on; they pointed him out in the circle. The red cloak (a maroon one of Edith's) identified him; Wordsworth had got hold of it, and was equipped like a Spanish Don—by no means the worst figure in the company. He had committed this fatal *faux pas*, and thought to slink off undiscovered. But as soon as, in my inquiries concerning the punch, I learnt his guilt from the Senhora, I went round to all our party, and communicated the discovery, and getting them about him, I punished him by singing a parody, which they all joined in: ''Twas *you* that kicked the kettle down! 'twas you, Sir, you!'

The consequences were, that we took all the cold water upon the summit to supply our loss. Our myrmidons and Messrs. Rag and Co. had, therefore, none for their grog; they necessarily drank the rum pure; and you, who are physician to the Middlesex Hospital, are doubtless acquainted with the manner in which alcohol acts upon the nervous system. All our torches were lit at once by this mad company

and our way down the hill was marked by a track of fire, from flambeaux dropping the pitch, tarred ropes, &c. One fellow was so drunk that his companions placed him upon a horse, with his face to the tail, to bring him down, themselves being just sober enough to guide and hold him on. Down, however, we all got safely by midnight; and nobody, from the old Lord of seventy-seven to my son Herbert, is the worse for the toil of the day, though we were eight hours from the time we set out till we reached home.—God bless you! R. S.

I heard of your election from your good and trusty ally, Neville White. If that man's means were equal to his spirit, he would be as rich as Croesus.

110. To John May

Liège, Oct. 6, 1815, six p.m.

My dear Friend,—I have a happy habit of making the best of all things; and being just at this time as uncomfortable as the dust and bustle and all the disagreeables of an inn in a large filthy manufacturing city can make me, I have called for pen, ink, and paper, and am actually writing in the bar, the door open to the yard opposite to this unwiped table, the doors open to the public room, where two men are dining and talking French, and a woman-servant at my elbow lighting a fire for our party. Presently the folding-doors are to be shut, the ladies are to descend from their chambers, the bar will be kept appropriated to our house, the male part of the company will get into good humour, dinner will be ready, and then I must lay aside the grey goose-quill. As a preliminary to these promised comforts, the servant is mopping the hearth, which is composed (like a tesselated pavement) of little bricks about two inches long by half an inch wide, set within a broad black stone frame. The fuel is of fire-balls, a mixture of pulverized coal and clay. I have seen a great deal, and heard a great deal—more, indeed, than I can keep pace with in my journal, though I

strive hard to do it; but I minute down short notes in my pencil-book with all possible care, and hope, in the end, to lose nothing. As for Harry and his party, I know nothing more of them than that they landed at Ostend a week before us, and proceeded the same day to Bruges. To-morrow we shall probably learn tidings of them at Spa. Meantime, we have joined company with some fellow-passengers, Mr. Vardon, of Greenwich, with his family, and Mr. Nash, an artist, who has lived many years in India. Flanders is a most interesting country. Bruges, the most striking city I have ever seen, an old city in perfect preservation. It seems as if not a house had been built during the last two centuries, and not a house suffered to pass to decay. The poorest people seem to be well lodged, and there is a general air of sufficiency, cleanliness, industry, and comfort, which I have never seen in any other place. The cities have grown worse as we advanced. At Namur we reached a dirty city, situated in a romantic country; the Meuse there reminded me of the Thames from your delightful house, an island in size and shape resembling that upon which I have often wished for a grove of poplars, coming just in the same position. From thence along the river to this abominable place the country is, for the greater part, as lovely as can be imagined, especially at Huy, where we slept last night, and fell in with one of the inhabitants, a man of more than ordinary intellect, from whom I learnt much of the state of public opinion, &c.

Our weather hitherto has been delightful. This was especially fortunate at Waterloo and at Ligny, where we had much ground to walk over. It would surprise you to see how soon nature has recovered from the injuries of war. The ground is ploughed and sown, and grain and flowers and seeds already growing over the field of battle, which is still strewn with vestiges of the slaughter, caps, cartridges, boxes, hats, &c. We picked up some French cards and some bullets, and we purchased a French pistol and two of the eagles

which the infantry wear upon their caps. What I felt upon this ground, it would be difficult to say; what I saw, and still more what I heard, there is no time at present for saying. In prose and in verse you shall some day hear the whole. At Les Quatre Bras I saw two graves, which probably the dogs or the swine had opened. In the one were the ribs of a human body, projecting through the mould; in the other, the whole skeleton exposed. Some of our party told me of a third, in which the worms were at work, but I shrunk from the sight. You will rejoice to hear that the English are as well spoken of for their deportment in peace as in war. It is far otherwise with the Prussians. Concerning them there is but one opinion; their brutality is said to exceed that of the French, and of their intolerable insolence I have heard but too many proofs. That abominable old Frederic made them a military nation, and this is the inevitable consequence. This very day we passed a party on their way towards France—some hundred or two. Two gentlemen and two ladies of the country, in a carriage, had come up with them; and these ruffians would not allow them to pass, but compelled them to wait and follow the slow pace of foot soldiers! This we ourselves saw. Next to the English, the Belgians have the best character for discipline.

I have laid out some money in books—four or five and twenty pounds—and I have bargained for a set of the *Acta Sanctorum* to be completed and sent after me—the price 500 francs. This is an invaluable acquisition. Neither our time or money will allow us to reach the Rhine. We turn back from Aix-la-Chapelle, and take the route of Maestricht and Louvain to Antwerp, thence to Ghent again, and cross from Calais. I bought at Bruges a French *History of Brazil*, just published by M. Alphonse de Beauchamp, in three volumes octavo. He says, in his Preface, that, having finished the two first volumes, he thought it advisable to see if any new light had been thrown upon the subject by modern authors. Meantime,

a compilation upon this history had appeared in England, but the English author, Mr. Southey, had brought no new lights; he had promised much for his second volume, but the hope of literary Europe had been again deceived, for this second volume, so emphatically promised, had not appeared. I dare say no person regrets this delay so much as M. Beauchamp, he having stolen the whole of his two first volumes, and about the third part of the other, from the very Mr. Southey whom he abuses. He has copied my references as the list of his own authorities (manuscripts and all), and he has committed blunders which prove, beyond all doubt, that he does not understand Portuguese. I have been much diverted by this fellow's impudence.

The table is laid, and the knives and forks rattling a pleasant note of preparation, as the woman waiter arranges them.

God bless you! I have hurried through the sheet, and thus pleasantly beguiled what would have been a very unpleasant hour. We are all well, and your god-daughter has seen a live emperor at Brussels. I feel the disadvantage of speaking French ill, and understanding it by the ear worse. Nevertheless, I speak it without remorse, make myself somehow or other understood, and get at what I want to know. Once more, God bless you, my dear friend.

Believe me always most affectionately yours,

R. S.

111. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Greenwich, Sunday night, Oct. 29, 1815.

Ecce, mi amice, adsum!
Res quapropter verè glad sum;
Sic et credo, legens es,
Quia est jucunda res.
Post trajectum dolorosum
Super aequor ventuosum
(Me miser! erat tota nox
Una vomitandi vox!)

Mare iracundum spit-us
Super Anglicanum littus,
Illic foundi gaudio summo
Tuam literam cum nummo,
Restamus domo nunc Vardoni
Socii, viatoris boni;
Unde cras, si bene speedo,
Forsan rursus te videbo.
Amorem meum tuae matri,
Da, Miss Pagae, atque fratri.
Hanc epistolam missivam
Classicalem et festivam,
You cum multis aliis may put,—
Vale, O dilectum caput! R. S.

112. To John May

Keswick, Wednesday, Dec. 6, 1815.

My dear Friend,—You will be glad to hear that we arrived safely this day, after a less uncomfortable journey than might have been apprehended from the season of the year. We found all well, God be thanked, and Edith, who complained a little the first day, got better daily as we drew nearer home. She complains of a headache now; but that is the natural effect of over-excitement, on seeing her brother and sisters and her cousin, and displaying the treasures which we have brought for them. We reached Wordsworth's yesterday, about seven o'clock. Three hours more would have brought us home, but I preferred passing the night at his house, for had we proceeded, we should have found the children in bed; and a return home, under fortunate circumstances, has something the character of a triumph, and requires daylight. Never, I believe, was there seen a happier household than this when the chaise drew up to the door. I find so many letters to answer, that to-morrow will be fully employed in clearing them off.

God bless you, my dear friend!—Yours most affectionately, Robert Southey.

113. To Sharon Turner

Keswick, April 2, 1816.

My dear Turner,—You will shortly, I trust, receive my *Pilgrimage,* the notes and title-page to which would have been at this time in the printer's hands, if I had not been palsied by the severe illness of my son, who is at this time in such a state that I know not whether there be more cause for fear or for hope. In the disposition of mind which an affliction of this kind induces, there is no person whom I feel so much inclined to converse with as with you.

I have touched, in the latter part of my poem, upon the general course of human events, and the prospects of society. But perhaps I have not explained myself as fully and as clearly as if I had been writing in prose. The preponderance of good, and the progressiveness of truth and knowledge and general well-being, I clearly perceive; but I have delivered an opinion that this tendency to good is not an overruling necessity, and that that which *is,* is not necessarily the best that might have been, for this, in my judgement, would interfere with that free agency upon which all our virtues, and indeed the great scheme of Revelation itself, are founded.

Time, my own heart, and, more than all other causes, the sorrows with which it has been visited (in the course of a life that, on the whole, has been happy in a degree vouchsafed to few, even among the happiest), have made me fully sensible, that the highest happiness exists, as the only consolation is to be found, in a deep and habitual feeling of devotion. Long ere this would I have preached what I feel upon this subject, if the door had been open to me; but it is one thing to conform to the Church, preserving that freedom of mind which in religion, more than in all other things, is especially valuable; and another to subscribe solemnly to its articles. Christianity exists nowhere in so pure a form as in our own Church; but even there it is mingled with much alloy, from which I know not how

it will be purified. I have an instinctive abhorrence of bigotry. When Dissenters talk of the Establishment, they make me feel like a high Churchman; and when I get among high Churchmen, I am ready to take shelter in dissent.

You have thrown a new light upon the York and Lancaster age of our history by showing the connexion of those quarrels with the incipient spirit of Reformation. I wish we had reformed the monastic institutions instead of overthrowing them. Mischievous as they are in Catholic countries, they have got this good about them, that they hold up something besides worldly distinction to the respect and admiration of the people, and fix the standard of virtues higher than we do in Protestant countries. Would that we had an order of Beguines in England! There are few subjects which have been so unfairly discussed as monastic institutions: the Protestant condemns them in the lump, and the Romanist crams his legends down your throat. The truth is, that they began in a natural and good feeling, though somewhat exaggerated,—that they produced the greatest public good in their season, that they were abominably perverted, and that the good which they now do, wherever they exist, is much less than the evil. Yet, if you had seen, as I once did, a Franciscan of four score, with a venerable head and beard, standing in the cloister of his convent, where his brothers lay beneath his feet, and telling his beads, with a countenance expressive of the most perfect and peaceful piety, you would have felt with me how desirable it was that there should be such institutions for minds so constituted. The total absence of religion from our poor-houses, alms-houses, and hospitals, is as culpable in one way as the excess of superstition is in another. I was greatly shocked at a story which I once heard from Dr. Gooch. A woman of the town was brought to one of the hospitals, having been accidentally poisoned. Almost the last words which she uttered were, that this was a blasted life, and she was glad to have done with it! Who will not wish

that she had been kissing the crucifix, and listening in full faith to the most credulous priest! I say this more with reference to her feelings at that moment, and the effect upon others, than as to her own future state, however awful that consideration may be. The mercy of God is infinite; and it were too dreadful to believe that they who have been most miserable here should be condemned to endless misery hereafter.

But I will have done with these topics, because I wish to say something respecting your second volume. You have surprised me by the additions you have made to our knowledge of our own early poetry. I had no notion that the Hermit of Hampole was so considerable a personage, nor that there remained such a mass of inedited poetry of that age. The Antiquarian Society would do well to publish the whole, however much it may be. You are aware how much light it would throw upon the history of our language, of our manners, and even of civil transaction;—for all these things I should most gladly peruse the whole mass. St. Francisco Xavier is not the Xavier who wrote the Persian *Life of Christ*. In p. 3 you mention some novel verses which relate to Portuguese history. If the Scald Halldon's poem be not too long, may I request you to translate it for me, as a document for my history. Observe, that this request is purely conditional, as regarding the extent of the poem. If it is more than a half-hour's work, it would be unreasonable to ask for time which you employ so well, and of which you have so little to spare.

Remember us to Mrs. Turner, Alfred, and your daughter. We are in great anxiety, and with great cause, but there is hope. My wish at such time is akin to Macbeth's, but in a different spirit—a longing that the next hundred years were over, and that we were in a better world, where happiness is permanent, and there is neither change nor evil.—God bless you!
Yours very affectionately, R. SOUTHEY.

114. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Wednesday, April 17, 1816.

My dear Bedford,—Here is an end of hope and of fear, but not of suffering. His sufferings, however, are over, and, thank God, his passage was perfectly easy. He fell asleep, and is now in a better state of existence, for which his nature was more fitted than for this. You, more than most men, can tell what I have lost, and yet you are far from knowing how large a portion of my hopes and happiness will be laid in the grave with Herbert. For years it has been my daily prayer that I might be spared this affliction.

I am much reduced in body by this long and sore suffering, but I am perfectly resigned, and do not give way to grief.

In his desk there are the few letters which I had written to him, in the joy of my heart. I will fold up these and send them to you, that they may be preserved when I am gone, in memory of him and of me. Should you survive me, you will publish such parts of my correspondence as are proper, for the benefit of my family. My dear Grosvenor, I wish you would make the selection while you can do it without sorrow, while it is uncertain which of us shall be left to regret the other. You are the fit person to do this; and it will be well to burn in time what is to be suppressed.

I will not venture to relate the boy's conduct during his whole illness. I dare not trust myself to attempt this. But nothing could be more calm, more patient, more collected, more dutiful, more admirable.

Oh! that I may be able to leave this country! The wound will never close while I remain in it. You would wonder to see me, how composed I am. Thank God, I can control myself for the sake of others; but it is a life-long grief, and do what I can to lighten it, the burden will be as heavy as I can bear. R. S.

I wish you would tell Knox what has happened. He was very kind to Herbert, and deserves that I should write to him.

115. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

April 18, 1816.

My dear Grosvenor,—Wherefore do I write to you? Alas, because I know not what to do. To-morrow, perhaps, may bring with it something like the beginning of relief. To-day I hope I shall support myself, or rather that God will support me, for I am weak as a child, in body even more than in mind. My limbs tremble under me; long anxiety has wasted me to the bone, and I fear it will be long before grief will suffer me to recruit. I am seriously apprehensive for the shock which my health seems to have sustained; yet I am wanting in no effort to appear calm and to console others; and those who are about me give me credit for a fortitude which I do not possess. Many blessings are left me—abundant blessings, more than I have deserved, more than I had ever reason to expect or even to hope. I have strong ties to life, and many duties yet to perform. Believe me, I see these things as they ought to be seen. Reason will do something. Time more, Religion most of all. The loss is but for this world; but as long as I remain in this world I shall feel it.

Some way my feelings will vent themselves. I have thought of endeavouring to direct their course, and may, perhaps, set about a monument in verse for him and for myself, which may make our memories inseparable.

There would be no wisdom in going from home. The act of returning to it would undo all the benefit I might receive from change of circumstance for some time yet. Edith feels this; otherwise, perhaps, we might have gone to visit Tom in his new habitation. Summer is at hand. While there was a hope of Herbert's recovery, this was a frequent subject of pleasurable consideration; it is now a painful thought, and I look forward with a sense of fear to the season which brings with it life and joy to those who are capable of receiving them. You, more than most men, are

aware of the extent of my loss, and how, as long as I remain here, every object within and without, and every hour of every day, must bring it fresh to recollection. Yet the more I consider the difficulties of removing, the greater they appear; and perhaps by the time it would be possible I may cease to desire it.

Whenever I have leisure (will that ever be ?) I will begin my own memoirs, to serve as a *post-obit* for those of my family who may survive me. They will be so far provided for as to leave me no uneasiness on that score. My life insurance is £4,000; my books (for there is none to inherit them now) may be worth £1,500; my copyrights, perhaps, not less; and you will be able to put together letters and fragments, which, when I am gone, will be acceptable articles in the market. Probably there would, on the whole, be £10,000 forthcoming. The whole should be Edith's during her life, and afterwards divided equally among the surviving children. I shall name John May and Neville White for executors—both men of business, and both my dear and zealous friends. But do you take care of my papers, and publish my remains. I have perhaps much underrated the value of what will be left. A selection of my reviewals may be reprinted, with credit to my name and with profit. You will not wonder that I have fallen into this strain. One grave is at this moment made ready; and who can tell how soon another may be required ? I pray, however, for continued life. There may be, probably there are, many afflictions for me in store, but the worst is past. I have more than once thought of Mr. Roberts; when he hears of my loss, it will for a moment freshen the recollection of his own.

It is some relief to write to you, after the calls which have this day been made upon my fortitude. I have not been found wanting; and Edith, throughout the whole long trial, has displayed the most exemplary self-control. We never approached him but with composed countenances and words of hope; and for a mother to do this, hour after hour, and night after

night, while her heart was breaking, is perhaps the utmost effort of which our nature is capable. Oh! how you would have admired and loved him, had you seen him in these last weeks! But you know something of his character. Never, perhaps, was child of ten years old so much to his father. Without ever ceasing to treat him as a child, I had made him my companion, as well as playmate and pupil, and he had learnt to interest himself in my pursuits, and take part in all my enjoyments.

I have sent Edith May to Wordsworth's. Poor child, she is dreadfully distressed; and it has ever been my desire to save them from all the sorrow that can be avoided, and to mitigate, as far as possible, what is inevitable. Something it is to secure for them a happy childhood. Never was a happier than Herbert's. He knew not what unkindness or evil were, except by name. His whole life was passed in cheerful duty, and love and enjoyment. If I did not hope that I have been useful in my generation, and may still continue to be so, I could wish that I also had gone to rest as early in the day; but my childhood was not like his.

Let me have some money when you can, that these mournful expenses may be discharged. For five weeks my hand has been palsied, and this brings with it a loss of means—an evil inseparable from my way of life. To-morrow I shall endeavour to resume my employments. You may be sure, also, that I shall attend to my health; nothing which exercise and diet can afford will be neglected; and whenever I feel that change of air and of scene could benefit me, the change shall be tried. I am perfectly aware how important an object this is; the fear is, lest my sense of its moment should produce an injurious anxiety.—God bless you! R. S.

You would save me some pain by correcting the remaining proofs,[1] for the sight of that book must needs be trying to me.

[1] Of the *Pilgrimage to Waterloo*.

116. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

April 30, 1816.

My dear Grosvenor,—Time passes on. I employ myself, and have recovered strength; but in point of spirits, I rather lose ground. The cause, perhaps, is obvious. At first, we make great efforts to force the mind from thoughts which are intolerably painful; but as, from time, they become endurable, less effort is made to avoid them, and the poignancy of grief settles into melancholy. Both with Edith and myself this seems to be the case. Certain I am that nothing but the full assurance of immortality could prevent me from sinking under an affliction which is greater than any stranger could possibly believe; and thankful I am that my feelings have been so long and so habitually directed toward this point. You probably know my poems better than most people, and may perceive how strongly my mind has been impressed upon this most consoling subject.

Yesterday I finished the main part of the *Lay*. There remain only six or eight stanzas as a L'Envoy, which I may, perhaps, complete this night; then I shall send you the whole in one packet through Gifford. I have said nothing about it to Longman, for I think it very probable that you may advise me not to publish the poem now it is written, lest it should give offence; and having satisfied myself by writing it, it is quite indifferent to me whether it appears now or after my decease. The emolument to be derived from it is too insignificant to be thought of, and the credit which I should gain, I can very well do without. So take counsel with any body you please, and remember that I, who am easily enough persuaded in any case, am in this perfectly unconcerned; for were it a thing of course that I should produce a poem on this occasion, there is at this time, God knows, sufficient reason why I might stand excused.

Do not imagine that the poem has derived the

slightest cast of colouring from my present state of mind. The plan is precisely what was originally formed. William Nichol is likely to judge as well as any man whether there be any unfitness in publishing it. You are quite aware that I neither wish to court favour nor to give offence, and that the absurdity of taking offence (if it were taken) would excite in me more pity than resentment.

Good night! I am going to the poem in hope of completing it. I cannot yet bear to be unemployed, and this I feel severely. You know how much I used to unbend, and play with the children, in frequent intervals of study, as though I were an idle man. Of this I am quite incapable, and shall long continue so. No circumstance of my former life ever brought with it so great a change as that which I daily and hourly feel, and perhaps shall never cease to feel. Yet I am thankful for having possessed this child so long; for worlds I would not but have been his father. Of all the blessings which it has pleased God to vouchsafe me, this was and *is* the greatest. R. S.

117. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

May 15, 1816.

My dear G.,—If egotism [1] in poetry be a sin, God forgive all great poets! But perhaps it is allowable in them, when they have been dead a few centuries; and therefore they may be permitted to speak of themselves and appreciate themselves, provided they leave especial orders that such passages be not made public until the statute of critical limitation expires. Who can be weak enough to suppose that the man who wrote that third stanza would be deterred from printing it by any fear of reprehension on the score of vanity? Who is to reprehend him? None of his peers assuredly;

[1] This refers to some observations which had been made upon the Proem to the marriage song for the Princess Charlotte. (Cuthbert Southey's note.)

not one person who will sympathize with him as he reads; not one person who enters into his thoughts and feelings; not one person who can enter into the strain and enjoy it. Those persons, indeed, may who live wholly in the present; but I have taken especial care to make it known, that a faith in hereafter is as necessary for the intellectual as for the moral character, and that to the man of letters (as well as the Christian) the *present* forms but the slightest portion of his existence. He who would leave any durable monument behind him, must live in the past and look to the future. The poets of old scrupled not to say this; and who is there who is not delighted with these passages, whenever time has set his seal upon the prophecy which they contain?

My spirits do not recover: that they should again be what they have been, I do not expect—that, indeed, is impossible. But, except when reading or writing, I am deplorably depressed: the worst is, that I cannot conceal this. To affect anything like my old hilarity, and that presence of joyous feelings which carried with it a sort of perpetual sunshine, is, of course, impossible; but you must imagine that the absence of all this must make itself felt. The change in my daily occupations, in my sports, my relaxations, my hopes, is so great, that it seems to have changed my very nature also. Nothing is said, but I often find anxious eyes fixed upon me, and watching my countenance. The best thing I can say is, that time passes on, and sooner or later remedies everything.

I will have the books bound separately, because a book is a book, and two books are worth as much again as one; and if a man's library comes to the hammer, this is of consequence; and whenever I get my knock-down blow, the poor books will be knocked down after me. But why did I touch upon this string? Alas! Grosvenor, it is because all things bear upon one subject, the centre of the whole circumference of all my natural associations.—God bless you!

R. S.

118. To Wade Browne, Ludlow

Keswick, May 26, 1816.

My dear Sir,—You will easily excuse me for not having myself informed you of our loss. It is the third which we have sustained, but the sorrow is now different in kind as well as in degree. The death of an infant seems repaired by the birth of another, and you lose in it more of hope than of actual enjoyment; yet God knows, even then the heart is wounded in its tenderest part. But in our present case, the loss is irreparable. Were there the probability of our having another son, I am not sure that I should desire it; so infinitely unlikely is it that he should resemble Herbert in those moral and intellectual endowments which rendered him all that my heart desired. No father was ever blest with a child more entirely such as he would have prayed for, and therefore it was that I always apprehended the calamity which has befallen me: I could not help feeling that when a creature of this kind came into the world, it was not likely that he should be suffered to remain in it; he lived in it long enough to know all that was good—and nothing but what was good; and he is removed before a thought of evil has ever risen in his heart, or a breath of impurity ever tainted his ears.

For ourselves, I hope we bear the visitation with true submission to the unerring wisdom which has appointed it. I have lost so many near and dear friends that my thoughts have been long and habitually directed toward the next world, as a point of hope—as the place where we are to meet again, and where we shall be separated no more. Meantime, though the very head and flower of all my earthly hopes and happiness is cut off, I have abundant blessings left: for each and all of these I am truly thankful; but of all the blessings which God has given me, this child, who is removed, is the one which I *still* prize the most. Most thankful I am that I should have been favoured with

such a son, and most happy in the certain assurance that this privation is only for a time. But for this faith it is scarcely possible that we should have supported the blow. The illness was of six or eight weeks' continuance; there was hope till the last—though from the first in my own mind fear predominated. It was found after death to be an accumulation of matter in the pericardium. Part of my prayers were granted; long as the decline was, and total as the decay, it was attended with the least possible suffering; and at the end he fell asleep. One word more, and I will have done with this painful subject:—his whole behaviour was in this, as in all his life—BEAUTIFUL.

I thank you, my dear Sir, for your very friendly letter. My tears even now are not without some portion of delight—such is the power of religion.

Remember us most kindly to Mrs. Browne and your daughters,—And believe me very truly and affectionately yours, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

119. To CHAUNCEY HARE TOWNSHEND

Keswick, June 5, 1816.

Thank you for both your letters. The history of your schoolboy days reminds me of my own childhood and youth. I had a lonely childhood, and suffered much from tyranny at school, till I outgrew it, and came to have authority myself. In one respect, my fortune seems to have been better than yours, or my nature more accommodating. Where intellectual sympathy was not to be found, it was sufficient for me if moral sympathy existed. A kind heart and a gentle disposition won my friendship more readily than brighter talents, where these were wanting.

I left Westminster in a perilous state—a heart full of feeling and poetry, a head full of Rousseau and Werter, and my religious principles shaken by Gibbon: many circumstances tended to give me a wrong bias, none to lead me right, except adversity, the wholesomest of all discipline. An instinctive modesty, rather

than any purer cause, preserved me for a time from all vice. A severe system of stoical morality then came to its aid. I made Epictetus, for many months, literally my manual. The French revolution was then in its full career. I went to Oxford in January 1793, a Stoic and a Republican. I had no acquaintance at the college, which was in a flagitious state of morals. I refused to wear powder, when every other man in the university wore it, because I thought the custom foolish and filthy; and I refused even to drink more wine than suited my inclination and my principles. Before I had been a week in the college, a little party had got round me, glad to form a sober society, of which I was the centre. Here I became intimate with Edmund Seward, whose death was the first of those privations which have, in great measure, weaned my heart from the world. He confirmed in me all that was good. Time and reflection, the blessings and the sorrows of life, and I hope I may add, with unfeigned humility, the grace of God, have done the rest. Large draughts have been administered to me from both urns. No man has suffered keener sorrows, no man has been more profusely blest. Four months ago no human being could possibly be happier than I was, or richer in all that a wise heart could desire. The difference now is, that what was then my chief treasure is now laid up in Heaven.

Your manuscript goes by the next coach. I shall be glad to see the conclusion, and any other of your verses, Latin or English. Is any portion of your time given to modern languages? If not, half an hour a day might be borrowed for German, the want of which I have cause to regret. I was learning it with my son; and shall never have heart to resume that as a solitary study which in his fellowship was made so delightful. The most ambitious founder of a family never built such hopes upon a child as I did on mine; and entirely resembling me as he did, if it had been God's will that he should have grown up on earth, he would have shared my pursuits, partaken all

my thoughts and feelings, and have in this manner succeeded to my plans and papers as to an intellectual inheritance.—God bless you!

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

120. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, Sept. 7, 1816.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—I would fain give your two letters all the consideration they deserve, so you shall have my first fresh thoughts at present, and my maturer opinion when I have chewed the cud.

So far as I can render any service towards upholding the existing Government (by which you will understand I do not mean a mere Ministry, but the old English order of things as by our Fathers established, and by me to be, if possible, transmitted unimpaired), I am ready to exert myself to the utmost, without regard to any personal considerations. But in what manner I could do this more effectually than I have for seven years past been endeavouring to do it in the *Quarterly Review*, and during four years of that time in the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, I cannot tell. To the management of a journal (if any such thing be contemplated) I am not equal.

If a full exposition of the state of things, a full display of our danger, and a resolute appeal to the sound part of the community should be thought likely to be beneficial, I am ready to undertake the task, and to perform it with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my strength. The possible advantage is, that such an appeal might strengthen the Government, and enable them to do what I advised in 1812, and what *must be done* if they would escape an attempt, *at least*, of a Jacobinical revolution—that is, to curb the *licentiousness* of the Press. My remedy is to make transportation the punishment for sedition, and thus to rid the country of those who would set it on fire. I could produce such a pamphlet as should startle the nation, if exertion were made to circulate it: without such

exertion it would fail to do this. Burke's name was such as to make thousands read his *Reflections* who were incapable of understanding him. My name carries with it no such charm, but all who read shall understand me.

It does not appear to me (at present) that it would be of any use to see Lord S—— or any of the persons in power. I believe that an interview would tend to abate their favourable opinion of my practical talents, in whatever manner they might estimate me in other respects. I am not a man of business—I am not a man of the world. They might be displeased; I am certain they would be disappointed. In the open field of conversation, there are five hundred men who might excel me, or baffle me; but at my post I defy the world.

The sum of this is, that if it be desired I will write upon the state of the nation: taking it in all points of view, looking the danger fairly in the face, and calling upon the Government to act *vigorously*.

I am interrupted; this, however, may suffice for to-night.

R. S.

121. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Sept. 11, 1816.

My dear Bedford,—Upon mature deliberation, I am clearly of opinion that it would be very imprudent and impolitic for me to receive anything in the nature of emolument from Government at this time, in any shape whatsoever. Such a circumstance would lessen the worth of my services (I mean it would render them less serviceable), for whatever might come from me would be received with suspicion, which no means would be spared to excite. As it concerns myself personally, this ought to be of some weight; but it is entitled infinitely to greater consideration if you reflect how greatly my influence (whatever it may be) over a good part of the public would be diminished, if I were looked upon as a salaried writer. I must, therefore, in the most explicit and determined manner,

decline all offers of this kind; but at the same time I repeat my offer to exert myself in any way that may be thought best. The whole fabric of social order in this country is in great danger; the Revolution, should it be effected, will not be less bloody nor less ferocious than it was in France. It *will* be effected unless vigorous measures be taken to arrest its progress; and I have the strongest motives, both of duty and prudence, say even self-preservation, for standing forward to oppose it. Let me write upon the State of Affairs (the freer I am the better I shall write), and let there be a weekly journal established, where the villanies and misrepresentations of the Anarchists and Malignants may be detected and exposed. But all will be in vain unless there be some check given to the licentiousness of the press, by one or two convictions, and an adequate (that is to say) an effectual punishment.

It would be superfluous to assure you that, in declining any immediate remuneration, I act from no false pride or false delicacy. Proof enough of this is, that at first I was willing to accept it. But I feel convinced that it would (however undeservedly) discredit me with the public. Every effort, even now, is making to discredit me, as if I had sold myself for the Laureateship. While I am as I am, these efforts recoil upon the enemy, and I even derive advantage from them. Do not argue that I suffer them to injure me if I refuse what might be offered me for fear of their censures. It is not their censures; it is the loss of ostensible independence, however really independent I should be. At present, in defiance of all that malignity can effect, I have a weight of character, and the rascals fear me while they hate me.—God bless you!

R. S.

122. To John Rickman

Keswick, Sept. 14, 1816.

My dear Rickman,—It would be inconvenient for me to leave home, and very reluctant should I be to do it, yet it is most likely that you will see me ere long:

for I suppose Lord L.'s desire of seeing me will be repeated. I have stated the danger broadly, and as broadly affirmed, that unless the *licentiousness* of the press be checked, nothing (as far as my judgement can foresee) can preserve us from revolution, and that in its most fearful shape. There are ten pages in No. XVI of the *Quarterly Review*, which might have alarmed the Government at that time, and perhaps would have done so, if they had leisure to think of anything besides the war. I must say the same things again in a different form, and go through the whole causes which are hurrying us on to anarchy. You must aid me with hints and corrections ; you know I am ever willing to learn, and upon many points properly distrustful of myself. But when I have the facts and the knowledge, no man knows better how to bring them out.

As to Owen, he is far gone in metaphysics, but neither rogue nor madman. We must see Lanark before we can fairly appreciate what he has done. In his views of society he is an enthusiast, and most imprudently blurts them out, when they can answer no possible purpose but that of raising an outcry against him, and injuring him in every way. I myself have a much stronger inclination to believe him right in the opinion, that to a community of lands we must come at last, than I should choose to avow ; but in my view of things, it can only be arrived at as the result of the greatest possible improvements in society : it is a *little* in favour of this system that it is the point upon which most Utopia-framers have agreed ; and that it does not necessarily debilitate the character is proved by Sparta, the men of which were not men-children, but men indeed. Let us leave this where it ought to be left—among good hopes and harmless speculations.

Manufactures are overdone, if a greater quantity of goods are produced than can be consumed—in other words, if the supply exceeds the demand. This error, I grant, corrects itself ; but, in the meantime, it produces the evil under which we are now suffering : when every nation manufactures for itself all that it is capable

of manufacturing, no danger of this kind will exist. But it is obvious, that as we improve in machinery (observe, I fully admit that it is an *improvement*—the greatest of all improvements in society, to make brute matter do the work of intellect), fewer hands are required, and that the market being already stocked, every improvement which facilitates the production of goods lessens the employment for workmen. Over such things Government can have no control, but (as at Lanark) the condition of the workmen may be bettered, and when men are contented, they are good subjects. Men like H., with an abstract love of evil, *quoad* evil, are monsters. You will not rank me among the Basil Montagues and mock humanity mongers, but, in my judgement, the best way to keep the poor in obedience is to better their condition. We will talk over our heresies, perfectly sure of agreeing upon what ought to be tolerated, and the nonsense which is talked about toleration.—God bless you. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

123. To JOHN MAY

Keswick, Oct. 18, 1816.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Herewith I send you a draft upon Longman for £100 at three days' sight. The last twelve months have proved highly advantageous to my monied concerns, and for the first time have made the balance of his accounts in my favour. There is good reason for hoping that it will continue so, and that it will not be long before I shall be able to clear off my debt with you. *Roderick* has produced for me above £500 by three editions, and the fourth will by this time have paid its expenses. Of the *Pilgrimage* 2,000 were printed: they were all sold in the course of two months, leaving me a profit of £215. My account only comes up to midsummer, and therefore does not include the *Carmen Nuptiale*, of the fate of which I know nothing —not, indeed, what number was printed.

The prospect before me is very good. The produce of my current publications may be reckoned at £200

a year certainly, not improbably at twice the sum; and Murray pays me so well for the *Quarterly*, that I hope there will be no occasion to trench much upon the other fund for my household expenses. For some subjects he offers me £100 per article: such was that upon the poor in the last number, and one upon foreign travellers in England which is designed for this, and which I am busy in completing. I have no debt but the one to you, and this I have great hopes of liquidating in the course of another year; for the next year is likely to be a productive one. The preface to *Morte d'Arthur* (for which I am reading much black letter, at some cost of eyesight and no little expense of time) will give me £200, and the second volume of *Brazil* about half as much, a preposterous instance of the caprice upon which a man of letters depends for his remuneration! Perhaps the average may be fair at last, but it is injurious as well as ridiculous that I should derive my main support from what other persons might do as well, and what might as well not be done at all; while for works of permanent value and great labour, for which peculiar knowledge, peculiar talents, and peculiar industry are required, the profit which I obtain would scarcely exceed, and perhaps not amount to, the expenses of the documents. This volume will certainly be published at Christmas, and though it will be less interesting than the concluding volume, I think you will not be disappointed in its contents. There will be no delay with the conclusion; I shall never lay it aside till it is completed, and the printing will be pursued without interruption.

I have written no verses till this week, when I resumed the *Tale of Paraguay*, which I may perhaps finish for publication in the spring. There is another subject nearer my heart, but I must refrain from it a while longer. It has pleased God to support us mercifully under the severest of all privations, and it would be sinful as well as in the last degree unwise, were I by any means to foster feelings which it is my duty, as far as possible, to overcome.

The summer (if summer it may be called) has brought with it more interruptions than usual, and unavoidably robbed me of precious time which I could ill afford. I am in consequence behindhand with many things, of which my long silence towards you is one proof. Mr. Walpole's memoir I shall resume upon the first interval; it is upon my conscience as the heaviest of all my sins of omission. The *History of the War* would go to press if the introductory chapter were finished: yet for this, which is less than an article for the *Review*, I have not found time. When I have reviewed Koster's book, I will abstain from minor articles, and dispose of the time then gained to better purposes. Here is a letter full of my own concerns; but I will not apologize to you.

I can enter fully into the feelings which your present awful situation must excite. Wholesome they are—however painful. We must not envy those who are on the threshold of our Father's house, but we may be thankful that every day brings us nearer to it ourselves. Meantime I labour diligently to acquire knowledge which I may leave behind, and to treasure up affections which I may bear with me.

Nash has made beautiful drawings of my four girls. Your god-daughter is well, and comes on in all things as I could wish her; the others, thank God, and their mother, are well also; and my own health perhaps is better for the exercise which I have taken with my various visitors.

We have gloomy prospects, of which it is easier to see the causes than the consequences. I very much fear that the efforts which are making to inflame the discontents of a distressed people, will produce dreadful effects. This is a wide subject, and I have no room to enter upon it. Whatever I shall see during the dark season is what I cannot tell. Possibly I may be called to town, but it will be with much unwillingness on my part. The winter is my working time; in the summer I follow the example of the grasshopper more than of the ant.

Remember me most kindly to Mrs. May and your

daughters. Remember me also to John Coleridge, whom I should be truly glad to see at Keswick.—God bless you. . . . . R. S.

124. To John Rickman

Keswick, Nov. 20, 1816.

My dear R.,—About the poor I am very anxious to be informed thoroughly, and very sensible how deficient I am in the right sort of knowledge on this subject; that is, how the great evil is to be remedied—that of the poor-rates. My present views can reach no further than to the slow alterations and preventives, of good instruction in youth and encouragement to frugality and industry afterwards by means of hope. Concerning immediate alleviations, I entirely agree with you in the great advantage of undertaking great public works, and stated it strongly some years ago in the first paper about the poor, which is in some respects better than the last, and which, if it had wrought duly upon the men in power, would have prevented all danger now. The anarchists felt its force, and for that reason have been spitting their venom at me ever since.

My scheme is something of this kind (but though I am always long even to dilatoriness in planning whatever I write, the plan is very much altered in the course of execution): 1st. State in which the war has left us, political and moral. 2nd. Necessity of that war, and Bonaparte drawn to the life, as the Perfect Emperor of the English friends of freedom. 3rd. Sketch of the history of anarchical opinions in this country from Charles the First's time. Wilkes and Junius the root in modern times—the first fruit was the American war; the French revolution the second. This leads to, 4th. A view of the united reformers, i.e. the enemies of Government, under their several classes; their modes of operation; their various plans of reform, and the sure consequences of each.

All this will be well liked, and if I looked for favour it would be prudent to stop here; but it is not from any such motive that I put myself in the front of the

battle. But here I wish to begin upon an exposure of the evils which exist in our state of society, and which it is the duty and interest of Government, as far as possible, to mitigate and remove. Some things should be got rid of as matters of scandal. To destroy influence in elections would be neither wise if it were possible, nor possible if it were wise; but it is not fit that men should sell seats in parliament; though very fit that they should be bought. I would have these bought openly, like commissions in the army, and the money applied to form a fund for public works, either national or provincial: a scandal is got rid of and a good produced, and the species of property which would be touched by it is one which ought not to have existed, as having always been contrary to positive law. I think, too, that the few great sinecures which still exist should be given up, and applied during the lives of the present incumbents to some purposes of public splendour, that they may give them up with a grace. I would also give members to the great towns which have none, restricting the voters by such qualifications as should, as far as may be, disqualify the mere mob. I would lay no stress on these things, further than as depriving the anarchists of the only topics which give a shadow of plausibility to their harangues.

The great evil is the state of the poor, which, with our press and our means of communication, constantly exposes us to the horrors of a *bellum servile*, and sooner or later, if not remedied, will end in one.

There are also great evils in the delays of law, which are surely capable of remedy, and in the expense of criminal law. A greater still in the condition of women; here we are upon your old ground: and passing from morals to religion, I think I could show how a great comprehension is practicable—that is, how the Church might employ those who would else be enlisted against her. And if there be a mode by which the tithes could be placed upon such a footing, or so commuted as to get rid of that perpetual cause of litigation, you are, of all men, most likely to point it out.

One topic more, which is not introduced here in its proper place, may conclude this long outline. All professions, trades, and means of getting a livelihood among us are overstocked. We must create a new layer of customers at home by bettering the condition of the lower classes, and giving them more wants, with more means of gratifying them. We must extend establishments instead of diminishing them—more clergymen, more colleges, more courts of law; and lastly, we must colonize upon the true principle of colonization, and cultivate every available acre at home. God bless you!—Yours very truly, R. S.

125. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Nov. 23, 1816.

My dear Grosvenor,—I want to raise £30 a year for four years from this time, and for this purpose:—

There is a lad at Richmond school (Yorkshire), by name Herbert Knowles, picked out from a humble situation for his genius (he has neither father nor mother), and sent to this school (a very excellent one) by Dr. Andrews, Dean of Canterbury, and a clergyman, by name D'Oyle (so the name is written to me); if it should turn out to be D'Oyley, of the Bartlett's Buildings Society and the *Quarterly*, so much the better. From these and another clergyman he was promised £20 a year, his relations promised £30, and Tate the schoolmaster, a good and an able man, gave him the run of his school (more he could not do, for this valid reason, that he has a wife and ten children); so his boarding, &c., were to be provided for. The plan was, that when qualified here, he was to go as a Sizar to St. John's; and this has been defeated by the inability of his relations to fulfil their engagements, owing to unforeseen circumstances, connected, I suppose, with the pressure of the times.

In this state of things, Herbert Knowles, God help him, thought the sure way to help himself was to publish a poem. Accordingly, he writes one, and introduces

himself by letter to me, requesting leave to dedicate it to my worship, if, upon perusal, I think it worthy, and so forth. Of course I represented to him the folly of such a scheme, but the poem is brimful of power and of promise. I have written to his master, and received the highest possible character of him both as to disposition and conduct; and now I want to secure for him that trifling assistance, which may put him in the right path, and give him at least a fair chance of rendering the talents, with which God has endowed him, useful to himself and beneficial to others.

Of the £30 which are wanting for the purpose I will give £10, and it is not for want of will that I do not supply the whole. Perhaps if you were to mention the circumstance to —— and to ——, it might not be necessary to go further. He must remain where he is till October next, and by that time will be qualified for St. John's.—God bless you! R. S.

126. To John May

Keswick, Jan. 1, 1817.

My dear Friend,—Your last letter gave me great and most unexpected concern. I had indeed believed that you were sailing on a quiet sea, in no danger of shoals or tempests. By what principle, or what strange want of principle, is it that mercantile men so often, for the sake of the shortest reprieve from bankruptcy, involve their nearest friends and connexions with them? I write to you in a frame of mind which you will easily conceive, looking back upon the year which has just closed, and reflecting on the trials with which we have both been visited during its course. Your loss, I would fain hope, may not prove altogether so great as you apprehend; and I would hope also that some prize in the lottery of life, full of change as it is, may one day or other replace it. Even at the worst it leaves you heart-whole. It will be long before I shall find myself so; and if life had no duties, I should be very far from desiring its continuance for the sake of any

enjoyments which it can possibly have in store. I have the same sort of feeling that a man who is fondly attached to his family has when absent from them—as if I were on a journey. I yearn, perhaps more than I ought to do, to be at home and at rest. Yet what abundant cause have I for thankfulness, possessing as I do so many blessings, that I should think no man could possibly be happier, if I had not been so much happier myself. Do not think that I give way to such feelings; far less that I encourage them, or am weak enough to repine. What is lost in possession is given me in hope. I am now in my forty-third year: both my parents died in their fiftieth. Should my lease be continued to that term, there is a fair prospect of leaving my family well provided for; and let it fall when it may, a decent provision is secured. Before this object was attained, great natural cheerfulness saved me from any anxiety on this score, and there happily exists no cause for anxiety when I have no longer the same preservative. My house is in order, and whenever the summons may come I am ready to depart. Dearly as I love these children, my presence is by no means so necessary as it was to him who is gone. He drew in his intellectual life from me, and a large portion of mine is departed with him. It is best as it is, for he is gone in the perfection of his nature, and mine will not be the worse for the chastening which it has undergone. Hitherto the lapse of time only makes me feel the depth of the wound. It will not be always thus. A few years (if they are in store for me) will alter the nature of my regret. I shall then be sensible how different a being Herbert, were he living, would be from the Herbert whom I have lost, and the voices and circumstances which now so forcibly recall him, will have lost their power. Too much of this. But holidays are mournful days to persons in our situation, and the strong forefeeling which I have always experienced of such possibilities has always made me dislike the observance of particular days. Your god-daughter is the only child whose birthday

I have not contrived to forget, and hers has been remembered from the accident of its being May Day.

God bless you, my dear Friend!—Yours most affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

127. To JOHN RICKMAN

Keswick, March 2, 1817.

MY DEAR RICKMAN,—It is quite impossible that I can find time for any additional engagements, at any price whatever which might be held out.

The sins of my youth are risen against me. Some rascal has just published a piece of sedition written in 1794, and peppered like a turkey's gizzard. I have written to Wynn to know whether it be better to obtain an injunction, or let the brimstone burn out; if he advises the former, Sharon Turner will take the necessary steps. The MS. was put into Ridgeway's hands twenty-three years ago.

My *Papel Forte* has been converted by the hand of Gifford into a Papel Fraco (*flaccus flaccidus*). He has, with more than his wonted skill, pruned out everything of practical application, everything original, and everything that was most forcibly expressed; *in pity*, as he says, *to the* TERRORS *of Ministers!!!*

I shall see you in April, and mean, God willing, to see Switzerland and the Rhine in May and June, and be home the first week in July, and ready for you in August.

Remember me to Mrs. R.—God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

128. To THE EDITOR OF 'THE COURIER'

[Printed in *The Courier, March* 17, 1817.]

SIR,—Allow me a place in your columns for my 'last words' concerning *Wat Tyler*.

In the year 1794 this manuscript was placed by a friend of mine (long since deceased) in Mr. Ridgeway's hands. Being shortly afterwards in London

myself for a few days, I called on Mr. Ridgeway, in Newgate, and he and Mr. Symonds agreed to publish it. I understood that they had changed their intention, because no proof-sheet was sent me, and, acquiescing readily in their cooler opinion, made no inquiry concerning it. More than two years elapsed before I revisited London; and then, if I had thought of the manuscript, it would have appeared a thing of too little consequence to take the trouble of claiming it for the mere purpose of throwing it behind the fire. That it might be published surreptitiously at any future time, was a wickedness of which I never dreamt.

To these facts I have made oath. Mr. Winterbottom, a dissenting minister, has sworn, on the contrary, that Messrs. Ridgeway and Symonds having declined the publication, it was undertaken by himself and Daniel Isaac Eaton; that I *gave* them the copy as their own property, and gave them, moreover, a fraternal embrace, in gratitude for their gracious acceptance of it; and that he the said Winterbottom verily believed he had a right *now*, after an interval of three-and-twenty years, to publish it as his own.

My recollection is perfectly distinct, notwithstanding the lapse of time; and it was likely to be so, as I was never, on any other occasion, within the walls of Newgate. The work had been delivered to Mr. Ridgeway; it was for him that I inquired, and into his apartments I was shown. There I saw Mr. Symonds, and there I saw Mr. Winterbottom also, whom I knew to be a dissenting minister. *I never saw Daniel Isaac Eaton in my life;* and as for the story of the embrace, every person who knows my disposition and manners will at once perceive it to be an impudent falsehood. Two other persons came into the room while I was there; the name of the one was Lloyd—I believe he had been an officer in the army; that of the other was Barrow. I remembered him a bishop's boy at Westminster. I left the room with an assurance that Messrs. Ridgeway and Symonds were to be the publishers; in what way Winterbottom might be connected

with them, I neither knew nor cared, and *Eaton I never saw.* There is no earthly balance in which oaths can be weighed against each other; but character is something in the scale; and it is perfectly in character that the man who has published *Wat Tyler* under the present circumstances should swear—as Mr. Winterbottom has sworn.

Thus much concerning the facts. As to the work itself, I am desirous that my feelings should neither be misrepresented nor misunderstood. It contains the statement of opinions which I have long outgrown, and which are stated more broadly because of this dramatic form. Were there a sentiment or an expression which bordered upon irreligion or impurity, I should look upon it with shame and contrition; but I can feel neither for opinions of universal equality, taken up as they were conscientiously in early youth, acted upon in disregard of all worldly considerations, and left behind me in the same straightforward course as I advanced in years. The piece was written when such opinions, or rather such hopes and fears, were confined to a very small number of the educated classes; when those who were deemed Republicans were exposed to personal danger from the populace; and when a spirit of anti-Jacobinism prevailed, which I cannot characterize better than by saying that it was as blind and as intolerant as the Jacobinism of the present day. The times have changed. Had it been published surreptitiously under any other political circumstances, I should have suffered it to take its course, in full confidence that it would do no harm, and would be speedily forgotten as it deserved. The present state of things, which is such as to make it doubtful whether the publisher be not as much actuated by public mischief as by private malignity, rendered it my duty to appeal for justice, and stop the circulation of what no man had a right to publish. And this I did, not as one ashamed and penitent for having expressed crude opinions and warm feelings in his youth (feelings right in themselves, and wrong only in their direction),

but as a man whose life has been such that it may set slander at defiance, and who is unremittingly endeavouring to deserve well of his country and of mankind.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

129. To C. W. W. WYNN, M.P.

Keswick, March 26, 1817.

MY DEAR WYNN,—I do not by any means regret the application to Chancery: it was the straightforward course; and the question could not have been referred to a Court of Law (being so plain a case) if a false defence had not been set up, and supported by perjury. There is a strong impression upon my mind that Winterbottom is dead; and it is much less improbable to me that a fellow should have been found to swear falsely in his name, than that he—a dissenting minister—a man who was said to have undergone the same change in his opinions as I have done, should in the first place be guilty of so base an act as to publish the book, and then to defend the act by a direct perjury. My magazines, in which it appears to me that I have read of his death, are unluckily forty miles off at the binder's. But I have taken measures for ascertaining this matter; and if it should prove that my suspicions are well founded, the transaction will assume a very different aspect from what it now wears. Luckily, I have the rough draft of my first letter, and shall therefore throw them both into one: but this I will delay till I have satisfied myself about Winterbottom.

A word or two about my intolerance. I recollect but two persons of whom I have spoken with acrimony in the true sense of the word: Whitbread in the *Register*, and Joseph Lancaster. In the first case, I was treating of a leading politician, whose opinions would have laid this country at Bonaparte's mercy. As for my allusions to the *Edinburgh Review*, it would surprise me much if I were censured for speaking as I think upon that subject, abstaining, as I have uniformly done, from anything in the way of personal defence during fifteen

years of continual attack on their part. In the article which William Smith pulled out of his pocket I have called Hunt an incendiary for one of the wickedest paragraphs that ever was written; and I have bestowed the same appellation upon Cobbett. Can any man in his senses think these misapplied? And for the passage which William Smith read (p. 227), it neither names any individual, nor alludes to any, but deals in generals, relating to those metaphysicians who begin by denying the difference between right and wrong. Of such men as myself there is plain mention (p. 237), and so far have I been from having ever sought to put my former opinions in the shade, that they are placed in broad daylight in the *Pilgrimage to Waterloo*; nor have I ever cancelled a line in my early poems on this account. They who blame me for intolerance should remember the abuse which has been incessantly poured upon me.

Wilberforce wrote me a very handsome letter upon William Smith's conduct, saying that he felt as if he had to clear his own character from a stain, till he assured me that he was not in the house at the time.

It will be unfortunate if I shall miss you on my transit. I shall be in London (God willing) on the 17th, pass a week with my uncle in Hampshire, and leave London for the Continent, if possible on the 1st of May.—God bless you. R. S.

130. To C. W. Williams Wynn, M.P.

Easter-Sunday, April 6, 1817.

Where, my dear Wynn, are the proofs of this intolerance of which you speak? I know not towards whom I have been intolerant, except it be Bonaparte; and I believe he does not come within the field of your toleration. The language of the *Edinburgh Register*, while it was in my hands, is that of a man who felt strongly and spoke plainly, but who made no difference between Trojan and Tyrian. In the *Quarterly* I have rarely had anything to do with politics, except in the

two last numbers; and the man who censures the last paper must stand up for Hunt and Cobbett. You probably know, better than I do myself, the manner in which I have been assailed ever since I was made Laureate. Has the intolerance been on my side? This affair would not have affected me more than the blowing of the wind, if it had not made my wife seriously ill; and *thus* it has vexed me so much, that I could certainly have challenged William Smith, if a sense of duty did not withhold me.

I have been greatly harassed and interrupted about the house which I inhabit; a writ is issued against the estate, and it will be sold in the course of the summer. I would fain have put off my journey in consequence, but I did not like to disappoint my companions; and, moreover, change of air, scenes, and circumstances is almost necessary for me. I have not recovered, and never shall recover, last year's affliction; and my worldly prospects are improving when I have no longer a heart to enjoy them. Were it not for these children, I should wish to be in yonder churchyard; this world has nothing to give me, and my heart, as well as my hopes, are in the next.—God bless you, my dear Wynn.

R. S.

131. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Jan. 6, 1818.

My dear G.,—I have two things to say to you, which would be reason enough for beginning a letter, even if I were not rather disposed at this time to pen-gossip with your worship, than to go on working.

First, then, an accident (which, though it would not require much time to tell it, would yet take up rather too much to be told just now) induces me to resume my *Inscriptions*. You, I believe, did not much like what you saw of them; but I am persuaded that, as pieces of composition, they will more completely exhibit my skill as an *artist*, than any other of my poems. Charles Taylor, whom I remember at Westminster, was killed at Vimeiro. I knew nothing of him,

and never exchanged a word with him; but he is the only Westminster man who comes in my way, and for that reason has a sort of double claim to a place in the series. He was a Reading man—you have friends at Reading—can you by their means learn what his services had been? The sepulchral inscriptions are, of course, epitaphs; and the epitaph should be a brief notice of all in a man's life which is worth noticing on his monument. My intention is not to be in any hurry with these poems, but to correct them at leisure, as severely as possible, and print them after the *History* is published, as an accompaniment, in the same form.

Secondly, I learn from Westall, that his brother has a great desire to make drawings from my operas—more especially from my *Thalaba*. However much I might like this, my liking can be of no avail, and the matter, of course, must rest between him and the *Longi Homines*, who, I suspect, will be like deaf adders. They will object that the poems are not new, and have no great sale; and, perhaps, the size in which they are printed would be a serious objection to the artist. What the *Longi Homines* should do, if they listened to him, should be to print an edition of my poetical works collectively in octavo, with the prints, *ad libitum*; and to have, in future, the separate edition of each in a smaller size, and without notes, so as to get into circulation among cheap books which are found in every country shop—a four-shilling *Roderick*, for instance. This would never interfere with the sale of the costlier form, and would get into circulation when even the current editions cannot. But the *Longi Homines* do not understand their own trade: the Grand Murray does. Nevertheless, I like the long man better than the great man.

Yet, between ourselves, I cannot help suspecting something very like a trick about the sale of Moore's poem; and the suspicion is not a comfortable one. A sixth edition of *Lalla Rookh* is advertised in the course of eight months. *Roderick*, in three years, is only in the fourth. Now, I am perfectly certain it

is no feeling of vanity (and you know how I feel upon such subjects well enough to believe me) which makes me think there cannot, possibly, have been this difference in the sale. How, then, do I explain the fact? By an apprehension that there is a *ruse de guerre* in it—a stratagem of that war which one bookseller carries on against another: that if I were to ask as large a sum for a poem as Moore has obtained, they might reply to me, 'There is not the same sale to be expected.' And this they would support by title-pages, putting, probably, the name of a new edition to every 500, or possibly a smaller number (for *Lalla Rookh* cannot by possibility have had such a sale as is pretended), while the first edition of *Roderick* was 500 only at a time; but the second, 1,500; the third, 2,000; and the fourth, 2,000.

You will do me a service if you will get from the review-gelder as many more of my old manuscripts as you can, and in future secure from him a set of proof-sheets in their first state; because the paper is always printed before he sets about the work of emasculating it. It is very easy for him to have an additional proof struck off in that state; and then what I have taken the trouble to write, and he is obliging enough to strike out afterwards, will be preserved for use hereafter. I make as large allowances as can be required for the management to which editor and publisher may feel or fancy themselves bound, but the striking out a sentence, or a paragraph, because Mr. Gifford does not like it, and the putting in one of his words or phrases when he happens not to like one of mine, has the effect of putting my forbearance to the proof. Once or twice I have written to him pretty strongly in remonstrance; then he flatters and promises, and next time goes to work again like a butcherly review-gelder, as he is.

If you happen to see Murray, I wish you would say to him he sent me in his last parcel, *Le Génie de la Revolution, considerée dans l'Education*, in two volumes. It promises a third, which was to include all that related to Bonaparte's reign, and was to be published in November last. This third volume is precisely the

thing I want for filling up the picture of France in the introductory chapter of the Peninsular War, and the sooner I can have it for that purpose the better, for I really long to be in the press. You can tell him this when you chance to see him, which will be better than my writing just now, when I am not in good humour with him—feeling myself scurvily treated about the last number, in more respects than one. But I do not mean to give the slightest intimation of this displeasure, either to him or the gelder; for however much they may look upon me as *their* tool, I shall make use of them as *mine*.

God bless you. I am in excellent condition for work. R. S.

132. To Chauncey Hare Townshend

Keswick, April 12, 1818.

My dear Chauncey,—I have just finished Henry Milman's poem, a work of great power. But the story is ill constructed, and the style has a vice analogous to that which prevailed in prose about 170 years ago, when every composition was overlaid with strained thoughts and far-fetched allusions. The faults here are a perpetual stretch and strain of feeling; and the too frequent presence of the narrator, bringing his own fancies and meditations in the foreground, and thereby —as in French landscape-engraving—calling off attention from the main subject, and destroying the effect. With less poetry *Samor* would have been a better poem. Milman has been endeavouring to adapt the moody and thoughtful character of Wordsworth's philosophical poetry to heroic narration: they are altogether incompatible; and Wordsworth himself, when he comes to narrate in his higher strains, throws it aside like a wrestler's garment, and is as severe a writer as Dante, who is the great master in this style. If Milman can perceive or be persuaded of his fault, he has powers enough for anything; but it is a seductive manner, and I think that, as our poetry in Cowley's days was overrun with conceits of thought,

it is likely in the next generation to be overflown with this exuberance of feeling.

This is a great error. That poetry (I am speaking of heroic narrative) which would reach the heart, must go straight to the mark like an arrow. Away with all trickery and ornaments when pure beauty is to be represented in picture or in marble; away with drapery when you would display muscular strength. Call artifices of this kind to your aid in those feebler parts which must occur in every narrative, and which ought to be there to give the other parts their proper relief.

Henry Milman was here, with an elder brother, about four years ago, who lodged at Keswick for some twelve months. He is a fine young man: and his powers are very great. They are, however, better fitted for the drama than for narration; the drama admits his favourite strain of composition, and is easier in its structure. Indeed, it is as much easier to plan a play than a poem of such magnitude as *Samor*, as it is to build a gentleman's house than a cathedral.

Do you know anything of Sir George Dallas? He has sent me some marvellous verses by a son of his not yet thirteen; as great a prodigy as I have ever read of. Verse appears as easy to him as speech; Latin verse is at his fingers' end like English; and he has acted a part in a play of his own composition like another young Roscius.

I am busy with history myself, and have written no poetry for many months; why this disuse, there is here hardly room to explain, if it were worth explanation. The account of Lope de Vega in the last *Quarterly* is mine, as you would probably guess. I have read widely in Spanish poetry; and might in historical and literary recollections call myself half a Spaniard, if, being half a Portuguese also, this would leave any room for the English part of my intellectual being. I anticipate much pleasure in showing you the treasures with which I am surrounded here upon these shelves. —God bless you!

R. S.

133. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, May 28, 1818.

This day, and not till this day, did I receive your manuscript and the very interesting letter by which it was introduced. You will have expected to hear from me ere this, and I think I know how you will have thought and felt, as a suspicion has arisen of something even less pardonable than the brutal sort of repulse which you have done me the justice not to anticipate. Parcels lie for me at Messrs. Longman's till they have occasion to send to me; they then travel by wagon, which, owing to the change of carriers, is a business of eighteen days, or sometimes three weeks. Your packet has been fortunate in not having been longer in Paternoster Row.

I reply to your letter without the delay of a single post, and with sincere pleasure; for though what I have to say may in some degree discourage hope, in all other respects it will correspond entirely to your wishes. The success of a poem, indeed of any composition whatsoever, does not depend upon its merit—or less upon its merit than upon any other cause. Of the volumes of poetry which are published, not one in twenty—perhaps I might say in fifty—pays the expense of publication, though there is not one of the whole number which would not have excited attention and secured a remuneration to the author had it been published thirty years ago. No persons, therefore, should risk the publication of a poem on their own account, unless the sacrifice of the money so expended were a matter of indifference. For the same reason booksellers will not purchase poetry, unless from some writer who is in vogue. But I must not leave you here, without trying what can be done. The 'Caroline Bowles, to whose very name and existence I was a stranger' this morning, cannot now be to me an 'insignificant' person, one whom I shall soon forget, or by whom I would willingly be forgotten.

Booksellers are not the most liberal, nor the most amiable of men. They are necessarily *tradesmen*; and a constant attention to profit and loss is neither wholesome for the heart nor the understanding. Of those with whom I have any dealings, Murray is the one who would be least unlikely to risk the publication of your poem, and the most likely to make the publication answer. He would perhaps take the risk upon himself, and give you half the eventual profits. Shall I write to him upon the subject? Poor as these terms may appear, they are the best that I have ever obtained for myself. My recommendation ought to have some weight with him.

I do not like such poems, because I am old enough to avoid all unnecessary pain. Real griefs do not lessen the susceptibility for fictitious ones, but they take away all desire for them. There is a great deal of beauty in it—a womanly fluency, a womanly sweetness, a womanly truth and tenderness of feeling, which I have enough of my mother in me perfectly to understand. It is provoking to think that if the same powers had been displayed in prose instead of verse, in a novel instead of a poem, there would have been little or no doubt of finding a publisher; for let the supply of novels be what it will, the demand is sure to outrun it.

Many years ago, I resided for a short time within ten miles of Lymington. I wish I were near enough now to see and converse with you. It is in planning a work that advice is useful; a single remark may then induce an author to avoid a fault which cannot afterwards be got rid of by any laborious correction. I do not mean to say that this poem has any such faults: a few verbal alterations are all I should suggest here, and a few omissions where they can be made without injury, chiefly for the sake of shortening it, because I foresee that its length will be a bookseller's objection. But to the point: if you think proper, I will write to Murray and ask him whether he will publish it; this I would wish you to consider as extremely doubtful; but if the application fails, it will

not be for any want of warmth and sincerity in the recommendation. And if it should fail, you must not be discouraged, but turn your thoughts to something else, in prose or verse, in which, if I can assist you by any advice, or direct you to any subjects which carry with them some attraction, I shall be very happy to show that you have not honoured with your confidence one who is unfeeling, and therefore unworthy of it. For the present farewell, and believe me,—Yours, with sincere regard, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

134. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, Oct. 26, 1818.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—I certainly shall not quarrel with just Nemesis and the other awful Powers of Vengeance, for any punishment which they may have inflicted upon two persons who thought proper to go to Oswestry and the country of the Welsh barbarians, when they might have come to Keswick, where they would have had fine weather and rare society to boot. I daresay you still smell like Jacob when he personated his brother Esau; unless, indeed, there be a filthy odour of leeks to overpower the hircine savour which you must have brought away with you. Faugh! You miserable men, to give up Derwentwater, and Skiddaw, and Saddleback (over which noble mountain I have walked this very day), and Wastwater (whither I would have gone with you, ye wretches!) and Crummock, and Borrodale, and Ulswater, &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., for rain, and lumbago, and an Oswestry parsonage! You might have laid in a stock of health for seven years upon these blessed mountains, where there would have been nothing between you and heaven. But you must go to Wales, forsooth! or to the Welsh border, which is worse, as if you had been a couple of sheep-stealers! and so would keep company with Taffy; or, like rats, were unable to resist a bait of toasted cheese!

So much, by way of condolence!

Now for myself. You will conclude that I am in tolerable health when you hear that I was on foot from half-past ten this morning till six this evening, without resting (more than a few minutes occasionally on a stone), or any other food than a single apple. The General was my foot companion, and Chauncey Townshend was with us on horseback; for he, poor fellow, has not strength for such undertakings. He has been with me nearly a month, and enjoys himself just as could be wished. I have been out a good deal with him, though less than if he had been a good pedestrian, and probably I may be the better for it.

You will have seen my two papers in the last *Q. R.* The Megistos thought proper, when he sent me £150 for them, to remind me that such prices could not be afforded unless the articles produced a *decided impression*, to observe that the *latter part* of *Evelyn* had been approved, and to offer some hints respecting the arrangement of such reviewals in future. I daresay my answer would astonish him. It was written in thorough good humour, and without expressing the slightest resentment at such impertinence: in truth, I understand his *humour* too well to feel anything except amusement at it. But I told him that though his prices were very liberal, it was nevertheless very plain that I was employing myself less profitably (of which I gave him convincing proofs), and less worthily (which he will not very easily comprehend), in writing for them than in pursuing my own greater avocations; and that, therefore, he must admit it to be a matter of prudence on my part, when I should have executed the paper in hand, to become only an occasional contributor to the *Q. R.*, instead of a regular assistant, and that at long intervals. He is chewing the cud upon this, and I shall adhere to my purpose.

Therefore, when I have finished what I have in hand for him for this next number, instead of supplying anything for the following one, I shall complete my tale of *Paraguay*, which, with the help of some drawings from Nash, will bring me about £300, by an edition of 2,000.

Then I shall go to my long-planned tale of *Oliver Newman*, and for this I will demand a price of the Longmen. By the time that I reach the age of fifty, if I should live so long, it is fit and proper that I should have realized enough to emancipate myself from all the drudgery of literature; that is to say, from all such writing as is performed merely for the sake of bread.

Herewith, I send you Ballantyne's promissory note —a lucky recovery of money which I had given up for lost, though I am still a loser to the amount of as much more. But this is the purchase-money of my share in that *Register*, for which I did such good yeoman-service. Do you put it into proper hands to negotiate it; and when you have the proceeds, add to them from my next payment as much as may suffice to buy in £300 in the £3 per cents. I have £100 already there, and shall then be worth £12 per annum. My incomings this year are considerably less than the last. *Kehama* and *Roderick* are reprinting, and will hardly pay their expenses next year; but I may look to *Wesley* for something, though it will be little in proportion to the time and labour bestowed upon the work.

These cares do not sit heavily upon me; except, indeed, that my death (a much more likely event than his own) would leave Tom to bear the whole penalty of his rash marriage. A circumstance of a very different nature affects me much more in my heart of hearts. After an interval of more than six years, I am likely to become again a father; and you may well imagine what feelings this must occasion, after the grievous loss which we have sustained in those years—a loss which I shall never wholly overcome. This prospect, indeed, only makes me feel more deeply how irreparable it is; for, setting aside the myriad or million chances against my having such another son as that incomparable boy, it is but too certain that I should neither have life nor heart ever again to perform my duty by another in the same manner.

This will prevent me from leaving home till February

or March. Edith's spirits are, as you may suppose, very much affected, and she suffers very much in her bodily health.—God bless you. R. S.

135. To C. W. W. Wynn, M.P.

Keswick, Nov. 4, 1818.

My dear Wynn,—Since I wrote to you at Boulogne, the greater part of my time has been consumed by interruptions of which I ought not to complain, seeing they must needs be beneficial to my health, however they may be felt in the sum total of the year's work. I have had for a guest Chauncey Townshend. There is something remarkable in the history of this family. His grandmother was a she-philosopher, a sort of animal much worse than a she-bear. Her housekeeper having broken her leg, she was exceedingly indignant at not being able to convince her that there was no such thing as pain; and when the poor woman complained that the children disturbed her by playing in a room over her head, she insisted upon it that that was impossible, because it was the nature of sound to ascend; and, therefore, she could not be disturbed unless they played in the room under her. This good lady bred up her children as nearly as she could upon Rousseau's maxims, and was especially careful that they should receive no religious instruction whatever. Her daughter had nearly grown up before she ever entered a church, and then she earnestly entreated a friend to take her there from motives of curiosity. This daughter has become a truly religious woman. The son has not departed from the way in which he was trained up; but as he is not a hater of religion, only an unbeliever in it, and has a good living in his gift, he chooses that his only son should take orders, this living being the most convenient means of providing an immediate establishment for him!

Chauncey Townshend introduced himself to me about three years ago by sending me some poems which for a youth of seventeen were almost better than

should be wished. When he first proposed to visit me, his father was thrown into a paroxysm of anger, notwithstanding the *mollia tempora fandi* had been chosen for venturing to make the request; but he suffered him to see me in London last year. He had formed a notion that I was a Methodist, and drank nothing but water; and I believe it raised me considerably in his estimation when Chauncey assured him that I seemed to enjoy wine as much as any man.

Wilberforce, also, has been here with all his household, and such a household! The principle of the family seems to be that, provided the servants have faith, good works are not to be expected from them, and the utter disorder which prevails in consequence is truly farcical. The old coachman would figure upon the stage. Upon making some complaint about the horses, he told his master and mistress that since they had been in this country they had been so lake-and-river-and-mountain-and-valley-mad, that they had thought of nothing which they ought to think of. I have seen nothing in such pell-mell, topsy-turvy, and chaotic confusion as Wilberforce's apartments since I used to see a certain breakfast-table in Skeleton Corner.[1] His wife sits in the midst of it like Patience on a monument, and he frisks about as if every vein in his body were filled with quicksilver; but, withal, there is such a constant hilarity in every look and motion, such a sweetness in all his tones, such a benignity in all his thoughts, words, and actions, that all sense of his grotesque appearance is presently overcome, and you can feel nothing but love and admiration for a creature of so happy and blessed a nature.

A few words now concerning myself. It was my intention to have spent the Christmas in London; a very unexpected cause induced me to delay my journey. More than six years have elapsed since the birth of my youngest child: all thoughts of having

[1] A part of Christ Church, so called, where Mr. Wynn's rooms were situated. (Cuthbert Southey's note.)

another had naturally ceased. In February or March, however, such an event may be looked for. My spirits are more depressed by this than they ought to be; but you may well imagine what reflections must arise. I am now in my forty-fifth year, and if my life should be prolonged it is but too certain that I should never have heart again to undertake the duty which I once performed with such diligence and such delightful hope. It is well for us that we are not permitted to choose for ourselves. One happy choice, however, I made when I betook myself to literature as my business in life. When I have a heart at ease, there can be no greater delight than it affords me; and when I put away sad thoughts and melancholy forebodings, there is no resource so certain.

I begin to be solicitous about making such a provision as should leave me at ease in my ways and means, if loss of health or any other calamity should render me incapable of that constant labour, from which, while health and ability may last, I shall have no desire to shrink. When my next poem is finished, I shall be able to do what has never before been in my power—to demand a sum for it. God bless you, my dear Wynn!—Yours most affectionately,

R. S.

136 To John May

Keswick, Nov. 16, 1818.

My dear Friend,—I know something of rebellions, and generally suspect that there has been some fault in the master as well as in the boys, just as a mutiny in a man of war affords a strong presumption of tyranny against the captain. Without understanding the merits of this case, it is easy to perceive that the boys believed their privileges were invaded, and fancied that the Magna Charta of Eton was in danger (the Habeas Corpus in schools is in favour of the governors—a writ issued against the subject, and affecting him *in tail*), —— took the patriotic side, acting upon Whig principles. They are very good principles in their time and

place, and youth is a good time and school a good place for them. When he grows older, he will see the necessity of subordination, and learn that it is only by means of order that liberty can be secured. I have a fellow-feeling for ——, because I was myself expelled from Westminster, not for a rebellion (though in that too I had my share), but for an act of authorship. Wynn and Bedford and Strachey (who is now chief secretary at Madras), and myself, planned a periodical paper in emulation of the *Microcosm*. It was not begun before the two former had left school, and Bedford and I were the only persons actually engaged in it. I well remember my feelings when the first number appeared on Saturday, March 1, 1792. It was Bedford's writing, but that circumstance did not prevent me from feeling that I was that day borne into the world as an author; and if ever my head touched the stars while I walked upon the earth it was then. It seemed as if I had overleapt a barrier, which till then had kept me from the fields of immortality, wherein my career was to be run. In all London there was not so vain, so happy, so elated a creature as I was that day; and, in truth, it was an important day in my life; far more so than I, or than any one else could have anticipated, for I was expelled for the fifth number. The subject of that number was *flogging*, and Heaven knows I thought as little of giving offence by it, as of causing an eclipse or an earthquake. I treated it in a strange, whimsical, and ironical sort of manner, because it had formed a part of the religious ceremonies of the heathens, and the Fathers had held that the gods of the heathens were our devils, and so I proved it to be an invention of the Devil, and therefore unfit to be practised in schools; and though this was done with very little respect for the Devil, or the Fathers, or the heathen gods, or the schoolmasters, yet I as little expected to offend one as the other. I was full of Gibbon at the time, and had caught something of Voltaire's manner. And for this I was privately expelled from Westminster, and for this I was refused

admission at Christ Church, where Randolph, from the friendship which he professed for my uncle, could not else have decently refused to provide for me by a studentship: and so I went to Balliol instead, in a blessed hour; for there I found a man of sterling virtue (Edmund Seward), who led me right, when it might have been easy to have led me wrong. I used to call him Talus for his unbending morals and iron rectitude, and his strength of body also justified the name. His death in the year 1795 was the first severe affliction that I ever experienced; and sometimes even now I dream of him, and wake myself by weeping, because even in my dreams I remember that he is dead. I loved him with my whole heart, and shall remember him with gratitude and affection as one who was my moral father, to the last moment of my life; and to meet him again will at that moment be one of the joys to which I shall look forward in eternity. My dear John May, I have got into a strain which I neither intended nor foresaw. Misfortunes, as the story says, are good for something. The stream of my life would certainly have taken a different direction, if I had not been expelled, and I am satisfied that it could never have held a better course. God bless you, my dear friend!—Believe me, most truly and affectionately yours, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

137. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, Dec. 5, 1818.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—It is, between ourselves, a matter of surprise to me that this bodily machine of mine should have continued its operations with so few derangements, knowing, as I well do, its excessive susceptibility to many deranging causes. The nitrous oxide approaches nearer to the notion of a *neurometer* than anything which perhaps could be devised; and I was acted upon by a far smaller dose than any person upon whom it had ever been tried, when I was in the habit of taking it. If I did not vary my pursuits and

carry on many works of a totally different kind at once, I should soon be incapable of proceeding with any, so surely does it disturb my sleep and affect my dreams if I dwell upon one with any continuous attention. The truth is, that though some persons, whose knowledge of me is scarcely skin-deep, suppose I have no nerves, because I have great self-control as far as regards the surface; if it were not for great self-management, and what may be called a strict intellectual regimen, I should very soon be in a deplorable state of what is called nervous disease, and this would have been the case any time during the last twenty years.

Thank God I am well at present, and well employed: *Brazil* and *Wesley* both at the press; a paper for the *Quarterly Review* in hand, and *Oliver Newman* now seriously resumed; while for light reading I am going through *South's Sermons* and the whole British and Irish part of the *Acta Sanctorum*.

In the MSS. of *Wesley*, which passed through Gifford's hands while you were absent, there was a chapter which I wished you to have seen, because both in matter and manner it is among the best things I have written. It contained a view of our religious history down to the accession of the present family; not the facts but the spirit of the history. You will be pleased to see how I have relieved and diversified this book, which will be as elaborate as a Dutchman's work and as entertaining as a Frenchman's.

I want now to provide against that inability which may any day or any moment overtake me. You are not mistaken in thinking that the last three years have considerably changed me; the outside remains pretty much the same, but it is far otherwise within. If hitherto the day has been sufficient for the labour, as well as the labour for the day, I now feel that it cannot always, and possibly may not long be so. Were I dead there would be a provision for my family, which though not such as I yet hope to make it, would yet be a respectable one. But if I were unable to work,

half my ways and means would instantly be cut off, and the whole of them are needed. Such thoughts did not use to visit me. My spirits retain their strength, but they have lost their buoyancy, and that for ever. I should be the better for travelling, but that is not in my power. At present the press fetters me, and if it did not, I could not afford to be spending money when I ought to be earning it. But I shall work the harder to enable me so to do.—God bless you! R. S.

138. To ——

Keswick, March 2, 1819.

Your letter, my dear Sir, affects me greatly. It represents a state of mind into which I also should have fallen, had it not been for that support which you are not disposed to think necessary for the soul of man.

I, too, identified my own hopes with hopes for mankind, and at the price of any self-sacrifice would have promoted the good of my fellow creatures. I, too, have been disappointed in being undeceived; but having learnt to temper hope with patience, and when I lift up my spirit to its Creator and Redeemer, to say, not with the lips alone, but with the heart also, 'Thy will be done,' I feel that whatever afflictions I have endured have been dispensed to me in mercy, and am deeply and devoutly thankful for what I am, and what I hope to be when I shall burst my shell.

O Sir! Religion is the one thing needful. Without it, no one can be truly happy (do you not feel this?); with it, no one can be entirely miserable. Without it, this world would be a mystery too dreadful to be borne—our best affections and our noblest desires a mere juggle and a curse, and it were better, indeed, to be nothing than the things we are. I am no bigot. I believe that men will be judged by their actions and intentions, not their creed. I am a Christian; and so will Turk, Jew, and Gentile be in Heaven, if they have lived well according to the light which was vouchsafed

them. I do not fear that there will be a great gulf between you and me in the world which we must both enter; but if I could persuade you to look on toward that world with the eyes of faith, a change would be operated in all your views and feelings, and hope and joy and love would be with you to your latest breath—universal love—love for mankind, and for the Universal Father, into whose hands you are about to render up your spirit.

That the natural world, by its perfect order, displays evident marks of design, I think you would admit, for it is so palpable that it can only be disputed from perverseness or affectation. Is it not reasonable to suppose that the moral order of things should in like manner be coherent and harmonious? It is so if there be a state of retribution after death. If that be proved, everything becomes intelligible, just, beautiful, good. Would you not, from the sense of fitness and of justice, wish that it should be so? And is there not enough of wisdom and power apparent in creation to authorize us in inferring, that whatever upon the grand scale would be the best, therefore must be?

Pursue this feeling, and it will lead you to the cross of Christ.

I never fear to avow my belief that warnings from the other world are sometimes communicated to us in this; and that, absurd as the stories of apparitions generally are, they are not always false; but that the spirits of the dead have sometimes been permitted to appear. I believe this, because I cannot refuse my assent to the evidence which exists of such things, and to the universal consent of all men who have not *learnt* to think otherwise. Perhaps you will not despise this as a mere superstition, when I say that Kant, the profoundest thinker of modern ages, came, by the severest reasoning, to the same conclusion.

But if these things are, then there is a state after death; and if there be a state after death, it is reasonable to presume that such things should be.

You will receive this as it is meant. It is hastily and earnestly written, in perfect sincerity, in the fullness of my heart. Would to God that it might find its way to yours. In case of your recovery, it would reconcile you to life, and open to you sources of happiness to which you are a stranger.

But whether your lot be for life or death, dear Sir, God bless you! R. S.

139. To Walter Scott

March 11, 1819.

My dear Scott,—My conscience will not let me direct a letter to your care without directing one to yourself by the same post.

A great event has happened to me within this fortnight—the birth of a child, after an interval of nearly seven years, and that child a son. This was a chance to which I looked rather with dread than with hope, after having seen the flower of my earthly hopes and happiness cut down. But it is well that these things are not in our own disposal; and without building upon so frail a tenure as an infant's life, or indulging in any vain dreams of what may be, I am thankful for him now that he is come.

You would have heard from me ere long, even if Mr. Ticknor had not given a spur to my tardy intentions. I should soon have written to say that you will shortly receive the concluding volume of my *History of Brazil*, for I am now drawing fast toward the close of that long labour. This volume has less of the kite and crow warfare than its predecessors, and is rich in information of various kinds, which has never till now come before the public in any shape. Indeed, when I think of the materials from which it has been composed, and how completely during great part of my course I have been without either chart or pilot to direct me, I look back with wonder upon what I have accomplished. I go to London in about seven weeks from this time, and as soon as I return the *Peninsular War* will be sent to press.

Our successors (for you and I are now old enough in authorship to use this term) are falling into the same faults as the Roman poets after the Augustan age, and the Italians after the golden season of their poetry. They are overlabouring their productions, and overloading them with ornament, so that all parts are equally prominent, everywhere glare and glitter, and no keeping and no repose. Henry Milman has spoilt his *Samor* in this way. It is full of power and of beauty, but too full of them. There is another striking example in a little volume called *Night*, where some of the most uncouth stories imaginable are told in a strain of continued tip-toe effort; and you are vexed to see such uncommon talents so oddly applied, and such herculean strength wasted in preposterous exertions. The author's name is Elliott, a self-taught man, in business (the iron trade, I believe) at Rotherham. He sends play after play to the London theatres, and has always that sort of refusal which gives him encouragement to try another. Sheridan said of one of them that it was 'a comical tragedy, but he did not know any man who could have written such a one'. I have given him good advice, which he takes as it is meant, and something may come of him yet.

It was reported that you were about to bring forth a play, and I was greatly in hopes it might be true; for I am verily persuaded that in this course you would run as brilliant a career as you have already done in narrative, both in prose and rhyme, for as for believing that you have a double in the field—not I! Those same powers would be equally certain of success in the drama; and were you to give them a dramatic direction, and reign for a third seven years upon the stage, you would stand alone in literary history. Indeed, already I believe that no man ever afforded so much delight to so great a number of his contemporaries in this or any other country.

God bless you, my dear Scott! Remember me to Mrs. S. and your daughter, and believe me,—Ever yours affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

140. To Walter Savage Landor

Keswick, May 7, 1819.

My dear Landor,—Your 'Ode' has been put in the right course: I found means of getting it delivered to the Swedish Ambassador, and he will transmit it to Sweden. This I should have told you sooner, if I had been in spirits for writing. It is now ten weeks since a son was born to me, and it is only within the last three days that I have been free from serious anxiety concerning his mother. Now I begin to breathe, and hope all will be well.

One of my brothers, a sea-captain, with a wife and six children, is come to live within four miles of me—in Newlands—between this place and Buttermere. This adds much to my enjoyments, and gives me, moreover, a motive to wholesome exercise which I might otherwise not be sufficiently disposed to take. He has some cows there upon poor land: and at the bottom of his field runs a *beck*, in which there is the most delicious bathing; natural baths of all depths, and seats where you may act the river god, and let the stream flow under your arms, and over your shoulders; no luxury is like it in a hot summer's day; and such days are already beginning.

Wordsworth has just published a little poem, to the tune of his *Idiot Boy*, and of the same pitch, with fine things in it, and a prologue which you will be much pleased with. I told him what you said of his poem, and he desires to send you this when an opportunity offers. It shall travel with my books, when they are ready, but you must tell me how to direct them. I am printing the last chapter of *Brazil*, containing a view of the state of the country at the time when the history concludes; that is, when the Court removed thither. Of the new states which are rising in the world, I think Brazil is likely to be the greatest. It is less likely to fall asunder than Yankeeland; and though the Brazilians are woefully behind the Yankees

in everything else, they have a sense of honour generally prevailing among them, which the Anglo-Americans seem to have renounced. Besides, the tendency of Brazil at this time is towards improvement in everything; the tendency in America is to level down everything to the dead flat of vulgar ignorance: they wish to have no other Master of Arts than he who has the *Ready Reckoner* at his finger's-end.

I have seen lately three young American travellers, all singularly accomplished men, from New England; two of them, indeed, among the most accomplished men in fine literature whom it was ever my fortune to meet. But such men, who would do honour to Old England (and for that reason regard the mother country with admiration and reverence), are as rare in America as men of old Roman virtues are in the country wherein you are sojourning. Everything tends to make the Americans merely ephemeral in their thoughts and feelings. They have no classical learning, no ancestry, no antiquities. Our French neighbours are fond of comparing us to the Carthaginians; the parallel would suit the Americans better, for their commercial, military, and naval skill, their boundless ambition, and their want of literature. New England is infinitely the best part of America; there the people are becoming more English in their feelings; and it is not a little singular that in that country the first attempt should be made for introducing religious establishments.

I have made some progress in my New England poem, and like what I have done. The swarm of imitative poets in this age is really surprising, and the success with which they imitate their models would be surprising also, if it did not prove that there can be no great difficulty in producing what may be imitated so well. Morbid feelings, atrocious principles, exaggerated characters, and instances of monstrous and disgusting horror, make up the fashionable compound; the more un-English, un-Christian, and immoral, the better, provided it be slavered over with a froth of philosophy. I have fewer imitators than any other poet of any

notoriety; the reason is, that I am less fashionable; and, perhaps also, that I am less a mannerist. To make up for this, I am favoured with more abuse than all the rest collectively. Wordsworth comes in for a very large share, and very often we go together. If my name be found in such company hereafter, it will be enough.

You are mentioned in a newspaper essay this week (the *Westmoreland Gazette*), as the English poet who most resembles Goethe, but as infinitely his superior. I do not know enough of Goethe to judge how far this assertion may be right; but a writer who estimated you so justly must have been capable of estimating him. Oh, that you had been as incapable of writing Latin verse as I am!—God bless you. R. S.

141. To Allan Cunningham

Keswick, July 10, 1819.

It is no easy task, Mr. Cunningham, to answer a letter like yours. I am unwilling to excite hopes which are but too likely to end in severe disappointment; and equally unwilling to say anything which might depress a noble spirit. The frankest course is the best. Patience and prudence are among the characteristic virtues of your countrymen: the progress which you have made proves that you possess the first in no common degree; and if you possess a good share of the latter also, what I have to say will neither be discouraging nor useless.

Your poem [1] contains incurable defects, but not such as proceed from any want of power. You have aimed at too much, and failed in the structure of the story, the incidents of which are impossible for the time and place in which they are laid. This is of little consequence if you are of the right mould. Your language has an original stamp, and could you succeed in the choice of subjects—I dare not say that you would obtain the applause of which you are ambitious—but I believe you would deserve it.

[1] *The Maid of Elvar*, as originally written.

Let me make myself clearly understood. In poetry, as in painting, and music, and architecture, it is far more difficult to design than to execute. A long tale should be everywhere consistent, and everywhere perspicuous. The incidents should depend upon each other, and the event appear like the necessary result, so that no sense of improbability in any part of the narration should force itself upon the hearer. I advise you to exercise yourself in shorter tales—and these have the advantage of being more to the taste of the age.

But whatever you do, be prepared for disappointment. Crowded as this age is with candidates for public favour, you will find it infinitely difficult to obtain a hearing. The booksellers look blank upon poetry, for they know that not one volume of poems out of a hundred pays its expenses; and they know also how much more the immediate success of a book depends upon accidental circumstances than upon its intrinsic merit. They of course must look to the chance of profit as the main object. If this first difficulty be overcome, the public read only what it is the fashion to read; and for one competent critic—one equitable one—there are twenty coxcombs who would blast the fortunes of an author for the sake of raising a laugh at his expense.

Do not, therefore, rely upon your poetical powers as a means of bettering your worldly condition. This is the first and most momentous advice which I would impress upon you. If you can be contented to pursue poetry for its own reward, for the delight which you find in the pursuit, go on and prosper. But never let it tempt you to neglect the daily duties of life, never trust to it for profit, as you value your independence and your peace. To trust to it for support is misery and ruin. On the other hand, if you have that consciousness of strength that you can be satisfied with the expectation of fame, though you should never live to enjoy it, I know not how you can be more happily employed than in exercising the powers with which you are gifted. And if you like my advice well enough

to wish for it on any future occasion, write to me freely; I would gladly be of use to you if I could.—Farewell, and believe me, your sincere well-wisher,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

142. To C. H. TOWNSHEND

Keswick, July 20, 1819.

MY DEAR CHAUNCEY,—I have not seen more of *Don Juan* than some extracts in a country paper, wherein my own name is coupled with a rhyme which I thought would never be used by any person but myself when kissing one of my own children in infancy, and talking nonsense to it, which, whatever you may think of it at present as an exercise for the intellect, I hope you will one day have occasion to practise, and you will then find out its many and various excellences. I do not yet know whether the printed poem is introduced by a dedication to me, in a most hostile strain, which came over with it, or whether the person who has done Lord Byron the irreparable injury of sending into the world what his own publisher and his friends endeavoured, for his sake, to keep out of it, has suppressed it. This is to me a matter of perfect unconcern. Lord Byron attacked me when he ran amuck as a satirist; he found it convenient to express himself sorry for that satire, and to have such of the persons told so whom he had assailed in it as he was likely to fall in with in society; myself among the number. I met him three or four times on courteous terms, and saw enough of him to feel that he was rather to be shunned than sought. Attack me as he will, I shall not go out of my course to break a spear with him; but if it comes in my way to give him a passing touch, it will be one that will leave a scar.

The third and last volume of my Opus Majus will be published in two or three weeks; they are printing the index. What effect will it produce? It may tend to sober the anticipations of a young author to hear the faithful anticipations of an experienced one. None

that will be heard of. It will move quietly from the publishers to a certain number of reading societies, and a certain number of private libraries; enough between them to pay the expenses of the publication. Some twenty persons in England, and some half-dozen in Portugal and Brazil will peruse it with avidity and delight. Some fifty, perhaps, will buy the book because of the subject, and ask one another if they have had time to look into it. A few of those who know me and love me, will wish that I had employed the time which it has cost in writing poems; and some of those who do not know me, will marvel that in the ripe season of my mind, and in the summer of reputation, I should have bestowed so large a portion of life upon a work which could not possibly become either popular or profitable. And is this all? No, Chauncey Townshend, it is not all; and I should deal insincerely with you if I did not add, that ages hence it will be found among those works which are not destined to perish; and secure for me a remembrance in other countries as well as in my own; that it will be read in the heart of South America, and communicate to the Brazilians, when they shall have become a powerful nation, much of their own history which would otherwise have perished; and be to them what the work of Herodotus is to Europe. You will agree with me on one point at least—that I am in no danger of feeling disappointment. But you will agree also that no man can deserve or obtain the applause of after ages, if he is too solicitous about that of his own.—God bless you! R. S.

143. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Nov. 6, 1819.

My dear Grosvenor,—The relationship between myself and Lord Somerville was so remote, that I really do not know in what degree of cousinship we stood to each other; but his mother was of Southey extraction, and on that side I was his nearest kinsman. A certain Canon Southey, of Fitzhead, in Somersetshire,

bequeathed his estates to him, in his childhood, as his nearest relation, and entailed a part of them, in case of his dying without issue, upon my father and his two brothers, and their issue male. The whole estates are about a thousand a year; whether the part which is entailed be worth contending for is very doubtful. Lord Somerville sold the whole. With this part he could not possibly convey a good title, unless he had had a son of age to join with him in cutting off the entail. My action would be against the present tenant—his against Lord Somerville's representatives. I know just enough of the business not to be disappointed if I am advised to let it rest. It was a most miserable will, never out of Chancery while my two uncles were living. Lord Erskine had it brought before him, and exclaimed at the name, for he remembered it when he was young at the bar. I have desired Osiris to consult with Turner, and as Turner may advise, so I shall do.

In the year 1790 or 1791, when my father was a ruined man, a person called upon him, and offered to treat with him for the purchase of his remainder. My father was too angry at the proposal to inquire who sent him. He always believed that his children had this chance in the lottery of life, and I believe common opinion in Somersetshire has always magnified that chance much beyond its real value, if it be now of any value.

To myself it is of very little consequence. My habits of labour are so fixed, that whether I wrote for a subsistence or not, I should be just as deeply engaged in the press; and the only difference would be that I should give up reviewing, and become perfectly indifferent to the sale of my books as a matter of profit. I am older in constitution than in years, and older in heart than in constitution; and I believe that if it were not for my children, I should not bestow even the thought that a mere inquiry occasions concerning any worldly inheritance. Six feet by three on the NW. side of Crosthwaite Churchyard, will be a sufficient estate for me.

Do not, however, imagine that I am out of spirits. I may live to do good service; and ten years more of health and tranquillity would enable me, I dare aver to you, to do more as an historian than has ever been done by any man before me; for I have great plans and great preparations.—God bless you. R. S.

144. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Dec. 3, 1819.

My dear Grosvenor,—I must trespass on you further, and request that you will seal up ten pounds, and leave it with Rickman, directed for Charles Lamb, Esq., from R. S. It is for poor John Morgan, whom you may remember some twenty years ago. This poor fellow, whom I knew at school, and whose mother has sometimes asked me to her table, when I should otherwise have gone without a dinner, was left with a fair fortune, from £10,000 to £15,000, and without any vice or extravagance of his own he has lost the whole of it. A stroke of the palsy has utterly disabled him from doing anything to maintain himself; his wife, a good-natured, kind-hearted woman, whom I knew in her bloom, beauty, and prosperity, has accepted a situation as mistress of a charity-school, with a miserable salary of £40 a year; and this is all they have. In this pitiable case, Lamb and I have promised him ten pounds a year each, as long as he lives. I have got five pounds a year for him from an excellent fellow, whom you do not know, and who chooses on this occasion to be called A. B., and I have written to his Bristol friends, who are able to do more for him than we are, and on whom he has stronger personal claims; so that I hope we shall secure him the decencies of life. You will understand that this is an *explanation* to you, not an *application*. In a case of this kind, contributions become a matter of feeling and duty among those who know the party, but strangers are not to be looked to.—God bless you! R. S.

145. To Walter Savage Landor

Keswick, Feb. 20, 1820.

Your poem has not found its way to me. It is either delayed or mislaid at Longman's. Oh that you would write in English! I can never think of your predilection for Latin verse but as a great loss to English literature.

The times make less impression upon me than upon men who live more in the political world. The *present*, perhaps, appears to you, at a distance, worse than it is. The future will be what we may choose to make it. There is an infernal spirit abroad, and crushed it must be. Crushed it will be, beyond all doubt; but the question is, whether it will be cut short in its course, or suffered to spend itself like a fever. In the latter case, we shall go on through a bloodier revolution than that of France to an iron military government—the only possible termination of Jacobinism. It is a misery to see in what manner the press is employed to poison the minds of the people, and eradicate everything that is virtuous, everything that is honourable, everything upon which the order, peace, and happiness of society are founded. The recent laws have stopped the twopenny supply of blasphemy and treason, and a few of the lowest and vilest offenders are laid hold of. But the mischief goes on in all the stages above them.

Do you remember Elmsley at Oxford—the fattest undergraduate in your time and mine? He is at Naples, superintending the unrolling the Herculaneum manuscripts, by Davy's process, at the expense of the Prince Regent,—I should say, of George IV. The intention is, that Elmsley shall ascertain, as soon as a beginning is made of one of the rolls, whether it shall be proceeded with, or laid aside, in hope of finding something better, till the whole have been inspected.

A fashion of poetry has been imported which has had a great run, and is in a fair way of being worn out. It is of Italian growth—an adaptation of the manner

of Pulci, Berni, and Ariosto in his sportive mood. Frere began it. What he produced was too good in itself and too inoffensive to become popular; for it attacked nothing and nobody; and it had the fault of his Italian models, that the transition from what is serious to what is burlesque was capricious. Lord Byron immediately followed; first with his *Beppo*, which implied the profligacy of the writer, and, lastly, with his *Don Juan*, which is a foul blot on the literature of his country, an act of high treason on English poetry. The manner has had a host of imitators. The use of Hudibrastic rhymes (the only thing in which it differs from the Italian) makes it very easy.

My poems hang on hand. I want no monitor to tell me it is time to leave off. I shall force myself to finish what I have begun, and then—good night. Had circumstances favoured, I might have done more in this way, and better. But I have done enough to be remembered among poets, though my proper place will be among the historians, if I live to complete the works upon yonder shelves.—God bless you!

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

146. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

March 26, 1820.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—Before I see you, you will receive the *Life of Wesley*, whereof only about two sheets remain to be printed. Some persons have expressed their expectations that the book will have a huge sale. I am much more inclined to think that it will obtain a moderate sale, and a durable reputation. Its merit will hardly be appreciated by any person, unless it be compared with what his former biographers have done: then, indeed, it would be seen what they have overlooked, how completely the composition is my own, and what pains it must have required to collect together the pieces for this great tesselated tablet. The book contains many fine things—pearls which I have raked out of the dunghill. My only merit is that of finding and

setting them. It contains also many odd ones—some that may provoke a smile, and some that will touch the feelings. In parts I think some of my own best writing will be found. It is written with too fair a spirit to satisfy any particular set of men. For the 'religious public' it will be too tolerant and too philosophical; for the Liberals it will be too devotional; the Methodists will not endure any censure of their founder and their institutions; the High Churchman will as little be able to allow any praise of them. Some will complain of it as being heavy and dull; others will not think it serious enough. I shall be abused on all sides, and you well know how little I shall care for it. But there are persons who will find this work deeply interesting, for the subjects upon which it touches, and the many curious psychological cases which it contains, and the new world to which it will introduce them. I dare say that of the twelve thousand purchasers of Murray le Magne's *Review*, nine hundred and ninety-nine persons out of a thousand know as little about the Methodists as they do about the Cherokees or the Chiriguanas. I expect that Henry will like it, and also that he will believe in Jeffery,[1] as I do.—God bless you! R. S.

147. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, April 12, 1820.

My dear G.,—My *Vision of Judgement* is not finished. I have made a fair transcript of it as far as it is written (260 lines), and may probably add something to it before my departure. But I think it will not do for publication at this time; because such an event as the King's death, while it is recent, is too affecting and too solemn a reality (in the present case) to be made the subject of a fiction. This, you will say, I ought to have considered before I began to write.

[1] 'Jeffery was the name given to the invisible cause of certain strange noises which annoyed the Wesley family.' See *Life of Wesley*, vol. i, p. 445. (Cuthbert Southey's note.)

Very true, but then I should not have written upon the subject. For certain as it was that everybody would be putting their wits in requisition, I should not have chosen to send anything into the world upon such an occasion unless it were altogether different from all other compositions that were to be expected.

If, however, my labour should be lost for the present (and if the objection to its publication strikes any person to whom I shall show it, as it does myself, I shall certainly lay it aside), it will not be thrown away. The metrical experiment which I have long been desirous of making, has here been fairly made, and with complete success. I have proved that hexameters may as well be written in English as in German; that they are in no respect dissuited to the genius of our language; and that the measure is full, stately, and sonorous, capable of great variety, great sweetness, and great strength. I shall certainly finish the poem, that it may be ready for publication after such lapse of time as may remove the objection to its appearance.

I am now filling up the paper upon the Churches, which I expect to dispatch by the next post; this being the ways and means upon which I have to count in London. And I take work of the same kind to occupy me at Streatham, that I may not be run short in the summer. Wesley's life must sell better than I expect it to do, if it balances my account with Longman, for I am sadly on the wrong side of his ledger. I know not whether you will attribute the perversity to me, or my fortune, but a perversity in one or the other, or both, there is. Twenty years ago when I would gladly have written poems as fast as the printer could carry them through the press, I must have starved if I had done so, and during seven long years I wrote reviews at seven pounds per sheet royal, because *Thalaba* and *Madoc* were lying in the publisher's warehouse. Now poetry would pay me better than anything else, but the inclination for it is gone; and if it were not with a view to profit, I do not believe that I should ever finish either of the poems which I have begun, and

am quite certain that I should never have courage to undertake another. That motive, however, is likely to operate with increasing force as long as I live; and as I am likely, according to all human probability, to die in the harness, I have only to hope that my strength may not fail me till the last.—God bless you.

R. S.

148. To Miss Katharine Southey

Streatham, Thursday, May 4, 1820.

My dear Kate,—Since I have been in London I have very often wished that you, and Isabel, and Bertha were with me for a little while, to see what a number of strange things there are to be seen in this great overgrown town. London is so large a place that if the whole lake of Keswick, and the whole vale from the end of the Lake to Bassenthwaite, and from Skiddaw and Latrigg on one side to the foot of the mountains on the other were covered with houses, altogether would not make so great a city as London by one half. Think then what a huge place it must be; and all full of streets, with no gardens or fields; nothing to be seen but buildings on every side, and stone pavements under your feet, and such a smoky air overhead that you can hardly see what a blue sky is. And then such a number of carts and carriages, going all day long through the streets, and almost all night too; and such thousands and ten thousands of people; from morning till night the great streets are as full as Keswick is upon fair-day.

I arrived in London on May Day, which is a holiday for the chimney sweepers. All the chimney sweepers, little and great, on that day are dressed as fine as they can make themselves, with ribbons of all colours, and a great deal of gilding about them, and feathers in their caps; and they go about the streets with a wooden thing in one hand (such as the churchwardens carry about in the church to collect money for a brief), and their brush in the other; and with these they make a clatter, and beg money from those who stop to look

at them. They have generally a green man in company who is also called 'Jack in the Bush', because he is in the middle of a green bush, which covers him all over, head and all, so that you can see nothing but his feet, and he goes dancing with the rest. This bush is ornamented with ribbons, and I have seen them in former times half covered with bright pewter pots and dishes, which it must have been a great fatigue to carry about and dance under their weight, especially in a hot day, and being so shut up from the air. This Jack in the Bush is a comical sight, but I am sorry to say that it does harm by frightening horses: a poor curate in the adjoining parish of Tooting the other day was thrown in consequence under the wheels of a stage coach, and it is not yet known whether he will recover from the dreadful hurts which he received.

But how you would like to see these chimney sweepers that are so very fine! I have seen you and Bell and Bertha look somewhat like them when you had dressed yourselves up; but you were never half so fine, because you had no gilt finery about your clothes. Moreover the sweeps beautify their faces in a remarkable manner. I will tell you how to do it if you wish to be as fine as they are. You know their faces are very smutty: they let the smut stay that they may be known for chimney sweepers: therefore to be like them you must first rub some soot upon your faces. Next, you must rub some whiting upon your cheeks and forehead, that there may be great white patches in the middle of the smut; and then upon the white you must rub a little rose pink, and upon that again here and there you must stick some beaten gold, so that the face may be black and white, and purple, and gilt: if you do this, you will then be as fine as so many chimney sweepers on the first of May. I must not forget to observe that the chimney sweepers make a feast with the money which is given them; and they are so fond of their holiday that they make the first of May last the whole of the week; so you may tell Edith that her birthday is not yet over in London.

If I were to describe the extraordinary things which I have seen in the shops only while walking along the streets, a whole letter would not afford sufficient room. I will only tell you, that in one window I saw a great many shaddocks, fresh from the West Indies, which fruit is like an orange, but as big as Cuthbert's head; and that I saw two horns of the narwhale or sea-unicorn, one on each side of a shop door.

I came here yesterday, and return to town to-morrow, when I am to breakfast with Miss Wordsworth on the way. There is no room here to tell you about your little Welsh uncles, Alfred and Southey, nor about your little Welsh aunt, Georgiana. It is Isabel's turn to have the next letter, and then I will write all about them, and about my little god-daughter, Bertha Vardon, who is your rival for the love of Mr. Nash, and calls him *mon ami*. However, don't you be too jealous; I shall bring Mr. Nash home with me, and that will be a great advantage for you.

God bless you, my dear child.—Your affectionate father, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

149. TO BERTHA, KATE, AND ISABEL SOUTHEY

June 26, 1820.

BERTHA, Kate, and Isabel, you have been very good girls, and have written me very nice letters, with which I was much pleased. This is the last letter which I can write in return; and as I happen to have a quiet hour to myself, here at Streatham, on Monday noon, I will employ that hour in relating to you the whole history and manner of my being ell-ell-deed at Oxford by the Vice-Chancellor.

You must know, then, that because I had written a great many good books, and more especially the *Life of Wesley*, it was made known to me by the Vice-Chancellor, through Mr. Heber, that the University of Oxford were desirous of showing me the only mark of honour in their power to bestow, which was that of making me an LL.D., that is to say, a doctor of laws.

Now, you are to know that some persons are ell-ell-deed every year at Oxford, at the great annual meeting which is called the Commemoration. There are two reasons for this; first, that the university may do itself honour, by bringing persons of distinction to receive the degree publicly as a mark of honour; and, secondly, that certain persons in inferior offices may share in the fees paid by those upon whom the ceremony of ell-ell-deeing is performed. For the first of these reasons the Emperor Alexander was made a Doctor of Laws at Oxford, the King of Prussia, and old Blucher, and Platoff. And for the second, the same degree is conferred upon noblemen, and persons of fortune and consideration who are any ways connected with the university, or city, or county of Oxford.

The ceremony of ell-ell-deeing is performed in a large circular building called the theatre, of which I will show you a print when I return, and this theatre is filled with people. The undergraduates (that is the young men who are called Cathedrals at Keswick) entirely fill the gallery. Under the gallery there are seats, which are filled with ladies in full dress, separated from the gentlemen. Between these two divisions of the ladies are seats for the heads of houses, and the doctors of law, physic, and divinity. In the middle of these seats is the Vice-Chancellor, opposite the entrance which is under the orchestra. On the right and left are two kinds of pulpits, from which the prize essays and poems are recited. The area, or middle of the theatre, is filled with bachelors and masters of arts, and with as many strangers as can obtain admission. Before the steps which lead up to the seats of the doctors, and directly in front of the Vice-Chancellor, a wooden bar is let down, covered with red cloth, and on each side of this the beadles stand in their robes.

When the theatre is full, the Vice-Chancellor, and the heads of houses, and the doctors enter: those persons who are to be ell-ell-deed remain without in the divinity schools, in their robes, till the convoca-

tion have signified their assent to the ell-ell-deeing, and then they are led into the theatre, one after another in a line, into the middle of the area, the people just making a lane for them. The professor of civil law, Dr. Phillimore, went before, and made a long speech in Latin, telling the Vice-Chancellor and the *dignissimi doctores* what excellent persons we were who were now to be ell-ell-deed. Then he took us one by one by the hand, and presented each in his turn, pronouncing his name aloud, saying who and what he was, and calling him many laudatory names ending in *issimus*. The audience then cheered loudly to show their approbation of the person; the Vice-Chancellor stood up, and repeating the first words in *issime*, ell-ell-deed him; the beadles lifted up the bar of separation, and the new-made doctor went up the steps and took his seat among the *dignissimi doctores*.

Oh Bertha, Kate, and Isabel, if you had seen me that day! I was like other *issimis*, dressed in a great robe of the finest scarlet cloth, with sleeves of rose-coloured silk, and I had in my hand a black velvet cap like a beef-eater, for the use of which dress I paid one guinea for that day. Dr. Phillimore, who was an old school-fellow of mine, and a very good man, took me by the hand in my turn, and presented me; upon which there was a great clapping of hands and huzzaing at my name. When that was over, the Vice-Chancellor stood up, and said these words whereby I was ell-ell-deed:—'Doctissime et ornatissime vir, ego, pro auctoritate mea et totius universitatis huius, admitto te ad gradum doctoris in iure civili, honoris causa.' These were the words which ell-ell-deed me; and then the bar was lifted up, and I seated myself among the doctors.

Little girls, you know it might be proper for me, now, to wear a large wig, and to be called Doctor Southey, and to become very severe, and leave off being a comical papa. And if you should find that ell-ell-deeing has made this difference in me you will

not be surprised. However, I shall not come down in a wig, neither shall I wear my robes at home. God bless you all!—Your affectionate Father,

R. SOUTHEY.

150. P. B. SHELLEY TO R. SOUTHEY

Pisa, June 26, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—Some friends of mine persist in affirming that you are the author of a criticism which appeared some time since in the *Quarterly Review* on the *Revolt of Islam*.

I know nothing that would give me more sincere pleasure than to be able to affirm from your own assurance that you were not guilty of that writing. I confess I see such strong internal evidence against the charge, without reference to what I think I know of the generous sensibility of your character, that, had my own conviction only been concerned, I should never have troubled you to deny what I firmly believe you would have spurned to do.

Our short personal intercourse has always been remembered by me with pleasure; and when I recalled the enthusiasm with which I then considered your writings, with gratitude for your notice, we parted, I think, with feelings of mutual kindness. The article in question, except in reference to the possibility of its having been written by you, is not worth a moment's attention.

That an unprincipled hireling, in default of what to answer in a published composition, should, without provocation, insult over the domestic calamities of a writer of the adverse party—to which perhaps their victim dares scarcely advert in thought—that he should make those calamities the theme of the foulest and the falsest slander—that all this should be done by a calumniator without a name—with the cowardice, no less than the malignity, of an assassin—is too common a piece of charity among Christians (Christ would have taught them better), too common a violation of what

is due from man to man among the pretended friends of social order, to have drawn one remark from me, but that I would have you observe the arts practised by that party for which you have abandoned the cause to which your early writings were devoted. I had intended to have called on you, for the purpose of saying what I now write, on my return to England; but the wretched state of my health detains me here, and I fear leaves my enemy, were he such as I could deign to contend with, an easy, but a base victory, for I do not profess paper warfare. But there is a time for all things.

I regret to say that I shall consider your neglecting to answer this letter a substantiation of the fact which it is intended to settle—and *therefore* I shall assuredly hear from you.—Dear sir, accept the best wishes of yours truly, P. B. SHELLEY.

151. To P. B. SHELLEY

SIR,—You have done me justice in believing that I am not the author of the criticism in the *Quarterly Review* upon the *Revolt of Islam*. I have never in any of my writings mentioned your name, or alluded to you even in the remotest hint, either as a man, or as an author. Except the *Alastor* which you sent me, I have never read or seen any of your publications since you were at Keswick. The specimens which I happen to have seen in reviews and newspapers have confirmed my opinion that your powers for poetry are of a high order, but the manner in which those powers have been employed is such as to prevent me from feeling any desire to see more of productions so monstrous in their kind, and so pernicious in their tendency. You perceive, sir, that I speak as I think, and therefore you will not ascribe my ready and direct denial of the criticism to the sort of menace which your note conveys, nor understand it as acknowledging in any man a right to call upon me for such a denial, upon no better grounds than a mere suspicion which he or his friends may

choose to entertain. Those friends of yours who have persisted in affirming that I am the author can have had no other ground. They have committed the gross impropriety of affirming positively what they could not possibly know to be true, and what happens to be absolutely false.

I reply to you, sir, because I cannot think of you without the deepest compassion. Eight years ago you were somewhat displeased when I declined disputing with you upon points which are beyond the reach of the human intellect—telling you that the great difference between us was, that you were then nineteen and I was eight-and-thirty. Would that the difference were no greater now! You wrote to me when you sent me your *Alastor*, that, as you tolerated my opinions, you supposed I should tolerate yours. Few persons are less intolerant than myself, by disposition as well as by principle, but I cannot admit that any such reciprocity is justly to be claimed. Opinions are to be judged by their effects—and what has been the fruit of yours? Do they enable you to look backward with complacency or forward with hope? Have you found in them a rule of life conducive either to your own happiness, or to that of those who were most nearly and dearly connected with you? Or rather, have they not brought immediate misery upon others, and guilt, which is all but irremediable, on yourself?

The tone of your letter gives me a right to address you thus; and there is one passage in it which induces a hope that I may not be addressing you in vain, for it appears that, deadly as your principles have proved, they have not yet wholly hardened your heart. Attend, I beseech you, to its warnings. Do not let any feeling of pride withhold you from acknowledging to yourself how grievously and fatally you have erred. You rejected Christianity before you knew—before you could possibly have known—upon what evidence it rests. How utterly unlike in this, and in every other respect to the superstitions and fables of men's devices, with which you in your presumptuousness have classed

it. Look to that evidence while you are yet existing in Time, and you may yet live to bless God for any visitation of sickness and suffering which, by bringing you to a sense of your miserable condition, may enable you to hope for forgiveness, and teach you where to look for it. God in his infinite mercy bring you to this better mind!

This is not the language of party animosity, nor of personal ill-will. Of the latter you will at once acquit me; and if you do not acquit me as readily of the former, it is because you do not know me enough, and are too much under its influence yourself.

I can think of you only as an individual whom I have known, and of whom I had once entertained high hopes —admiring his talents—giving him credit for good feelings and virtuous desires—and whom I now regard not more with condemnation than with pity.—Believe me, therefore, to be your sincere well-wisher,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

152. To WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Keswick, August 14, 1820.

MY DEAR LANDOR,—Ere this I trust you will have received Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*, his *Waggoner*, and his *Sonnets on the River Dee*, &c., the last volume of the *History of Brazil*, and the *Life of Wesley*. They were detained some time for the chance that your brother Robert might have occasion to send anything in the same package.

After having been nearly three months from home, you may suppose with what pleasure I returned to my own family, my own fireside, and my own pursuits. During my absence, to gratify others rather than myself, I went to Oxford to receive an honorary degree. Except that I passed through it twice in stage coaches —once after the inhabitants were gone to bed, and once after they had got up—I had not been there since I left in 1794, with the intention of bidding farewell, not to the University alone, but to England and to

Europe, and trying an Utopian scheme in the back settlements of the United States. After the business of the theatre was over I went into Christ Church Walk, and there *chewed* the cud of remembrance. Except Phillimore, the Professor of Law, I did not meet with one contemporary of whom I had even the slightest knowledge. In the evening, or rather at night, I dined in Balliol Hall with the Master and Fellows—all being so much my juniors that the master himself did not enter the college till some years after I had left it. There was no person to recognize me but the porter, a poor fellow, who, in my time, had served as hair-dresser, and supplied the college with fruit. His wife had been my laundress; and the poor infirm old woman sat up till midnight, that she might see me when I was let out.

Ill as you must think of the rabble and of the Whigs, who have long since proved that it is possible to be at the same time odious and contemptible, you cannot but marvel at the effect which the modern Messalina has produced in London. Ballad singers go about the streets proclaiming the Queen's title to the throne, and, in doggerel rhymes declaring that she shall speedily be seated there, and reign by the people's free election. There is every probability of a more tremendous explosion than that which Lord George Gordon brought about in our childhood; and no reliance can be placed upon the soldiers. For they are not only duped by the devilish newspapers to believe that the Queen is an innocent and injured woman, but they are infected by the moral pestilence of the age, since the armies in Spain and Naples have chose to interfere in state affairs. Before this letter can reach you the crisis will, in all likelihood, have come on. It will be a trial between the Government, supported by the civil power alone, and the mob, with the traitorous Whigs and the Press on their side—the troops being worse than doubtful. Of course care is taken to send away such regiments as have given the plainest indication of their determination 'to see the Queen through it', as they

express themselves. My comfort is that as things must be worse before they can be better, the sooner the abscess bursts the more strength there will be in the constitution to turn off and struggle through the disease. The only chance of getting safely through the affair is, that the evidence against this woman may convince the honest person who now believes her to be innocent; but as the villainous part of her partizans outnumber the others ten times told, there is but a poor hope.

Being blessed with good spirits and cheerful opinions, I have a habit of looking on with a resolute hope, however unfavourable may be the aspects. One of my occupations at this time is a series of dialogues, upon a plan which was suggested by Boethius. The motto will explain their object: it is in three words, which I found somewhere quoted from St. Bernard, 'RESPICE, ASPICE, PROSPICE.' I am going to press, *quam celerrime*, with the *History of the Peninsular War*. In poetry I have done little, but must take up those poems, which have been so long in hand, in good earnest ere long and go through with them. The difficulty of Spenser's stanza has, I think, very much impeded my progress in the *Tale of Paraguay*, though with what is done I am very much pleased myself.

My little boy is now a year and half old, as healthy, as intelligent, and as good-natured as one could wish.

You will scarcely know London when you return to it; that is if we have any such city left a few years hence, which is rather doubtful, as some of our Catilines have more than once intended to set it on fire in sundry places. What with pulling down narrow streets and lanes, and building wide streets, circles, and Heaven knows what, they are making it a very fine place; and when the inhabitants are brought to consume their smoke in the fire, instead of letting it go up the chimney, we shall have as clean (though not as clear) an atmosphere as our neighbours on the Continent, which was the case before pit coal came into use.

Direct the books to the care of Messrs. Longman,

Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, London, and they will find their way to me. The duty is no object except for voluminous works in folio.—God bless you. R. S.

153. P. B. Shelley to R. Southey

Pisa, August 17, 1820.

Dear Sir,—Allow me to acknowledge the sincere pleasure which I received from the first paragraph of your letter. The disavowal it contained was just such as I firmly anticipated.

Allow me also to assure you, that no menace implied in my letter could have the remotest application to yourself. I am not indeed aware that it contained any menace. I recollect expressing what contempt I felt, in the hope that you might meet the wretched hireling who has so closely imitated your style as to deceive all but those who knew you into a belief that he was you, at Murray's, or somewhere, and that you would inflict my letter on him, as a recompense for sowing ill-will between those who wish each other all good, as you and I do.

I confess your recommendation to adopt the system of ideas you call Christianity has little weight with me, whether you mean the popular superstition in all its articles, or some more refined theory with respect to those events and opinions which put an end to the graceful religion of the Greeks. To judge of the doctrines by their effects, one would think that this religion were called the religion of Christ and Charity, *ut lucus a non lucendo*, when I consider the manner in which they seem to have transformed the disposition and understanding of you and men of the most amiable manners and the highest accomplishments, so that even when recommending Christianity you cannot forbear breathing out defiance, against the express words of Christ. What would you have me think? You accuse me, on what evidence I cannot guess, of *guilt*—a bald word, sir, this, and one which would have required me to write to you in another tone, had you addressed it to

any one except myself. Instead, therefore, of refraining from 'judging that you be not judged', you not only judge but condemn, and that to a punishment which its victim must be either among the meanest or the loftiest not to regard as bitterer than death. But you are such a pure one as Jesus Christ found not in all Judea to throw the first stone against the woman taken in adultery!

With what care do the most tyrannical Courts of Judicature weigh evidence, and surround the accused with protecting forms; with what reluctance do they pronounce their cruel and presumptuous decisions compared with you! You select a single passage out of a life otherwise not only spotless but spent in an impassioned pursuit of virtue, which looks like a blot, merely because I regulated my domestic arrangements without deferring to the notions of the vulgar, although I might have done so quite as conveniently had I descended to their base thoughts—this you call *guilt*. I might answer you in another manner, but I take God to witness, if such a Being is now regarding both you and me, and I pledge myself if we meet, as perhaps you expect, before Him after death, to repeat the same in His presence—that you accuse me wrongfully. I am innocent of ill, either done or intended; the consequences you allude to flowed in no respect from me. If you were my friend, I could tell you a history that would make you open your eyes; but I shall certainly never make the public my familiar confidant.

You say you judge of opinions by the fruits; so do I, but by their remote and permanent fruits—such fruits of rash judgement as Christianity seems to have produced in you. The immediate fruits of all new opinions are indeed calamity to the promulgators and professors; but we see the end of nothing, and it is in acting well, in contempt of present advantage, that virtue consists.

I need not to be instructed that the opinion of the ruling party to which you have attached yourself always exacts, contumeliously receives, and never

reciprocates, toleration. 'But there is a tide in the affairs of men'—it is rising while we speak.

Another specimen of your Christianity is the judgement you form of the spirit of my verses, from the abuse of the Reviews. I have desired Mr. Ollier to send you those last published; they may amuse you, for one of them—indeed neither have anything to do with those speculations on which we differ.

I cannot hope that you will be candid enough to feel, or if you feel, to own, that you have done ill in accusing, even in your mind, an innocent and a persecuted man, whose only real offence is the holding opinions something similar to those which you once held respecting the existing state of society. Without this, further correspondence, the object for which I renewed it being once obtained, must, from the differences in our judgement, be irksome and useless. I hope some day to meet you in London, and ten minutes' conversation is worth ten folios of writing. Meanwhile assure yourself that, among all your good wishers, you have none who wish you better than, dear sir,—Your very faithful and obedient Servant,

P. B. Shelley.

PS.—I ought not to omit that I have had sickness enough, and that at this moment I have so severe a pain in the side that I can hardly write. All this is of no account in the favour of what you, or any one else, calls Christianity; surely it would be better to wish me health and healthful sensations. *I* hope the chickens will not come home to roost![1]

154. To P. B. Shelley

Yesterday, sir, I received your present of the *Cenci* and the *Prometheus*. I thank you for these books, and little as the time is which I can allow for correspondence

[1] In reference to the motto of *The Curse of Kehama*—'Curses are like young chickens, they always come home to roost.'

of any kind, I think it proper to [reply to ?] your letter of August 29,[1] which announced them.

You tell me that I have selected out of a life 'otherwise not only spotless, but spent in the impassioned pursuit of virtue, a single passage which looks like a blot, merely because you regulated your domestic arrangements without reference to the notions of the vulgar', and you accuse me of passing a rash and unjust judgement. Let us look to the case—I will state it with no uncharitable spirit, and with no unfriendly purpose.

When you were a mere youth at College you took up atheistical opinions—you endeavoured to make proselytes to these opinions in a girls' boarding-school. One of the girls was expelled for the zeal with which she entered into your views, and you made her the most honourable amends in your power by marrying her. Shortly afterwards you came to Keswick. There was no appearance, when I saw you, that your principles had injured your heart. As yet you had had no proof of this tendency in yourself, but you had seen a memorable one in the conduct of your first speculation (speculative ?) and literary associate, who accompanied you to Scotland on your matrimonial expedition, and on your way back would have seduced your wife. This I had from your own lips: your feelings at that time were humane and generous, and your intentions good. I felt a greater interest in your welfare than I expressed to you, and took such indirect means as were in my power of assuring your father that, erroneous as your conduct was, it was still to be expected that your heart would bring you right, and that everything might be hoped from your genius and your virtues.

Such was my opinion of you when we parted. What I heard of your subsequent conduct tended always to lower it, except as regarded your talents. At length you forsook your wife, because you were tired of her,

[1] Probably an error in Caroline Bowles's transcript: query *August* 17. [E. Dowden.]

and had found another woman more suited to your taste. You could tell me a history, you say, which would make me open my eyes: perhaps they are already open. It is a matter of public notoriety that your wife destroyed herself. Knowing in what manner she bore your desertion, I never attributed this to her sensibility on that score. I have heard it otherwise explained: I have heard that she followed your example as faithfully as your lessons, and that the catastrophe was produced by shame. Be this as it may, ask your own heart, whether you have not been the whole, sole, and direct cause of her destruction. You corrupted her opinions; you robbed her of her moral and religious principles; you debauched her mind. But for you and your lessons she might have gone through the world innocently and happily.

I will do you justice, sir. While you were at Keswick you told your bride that you regarded marriage as a mere ceremony, and would live with her no longer than you liked her. I dare say you told her this before the ceremony, and that you persuaded her that there was nothing sacred in the tie. But that she should have considered this as the condition upon which she was married, or that you yourself at that time looked forward to a breach of the connexion, I do not believe. I think still too well of your original nature to believe it. She trusted to your heart, not your opinions. She relied upon your generosity, your affection, your tenderness, your first love. The wife of your youth might well rely upon these, and with the more confidence when she became the mother of your first children.

No, sir, you were not depraved enough to think you could ever desert her when you talked of it as a possible event; and if you had not tampered with your own heart with speculations upon such possibilities, and contemplating them as lawful and allowable, her confidence in you could not have been deceived. That sophistry which endeavours to confound the plain broad distinction between right and wrong can never be employed innocently or with impunity. Some men are wicked

by disposition, others become so in their weakness, yielding to temptation; but you have corrupted in yourself an excellent nature. You have sought for temptation and courted it; and have reasoned yourself into a state of mind so pernicious that your character, with your domestic arrangements, as you term it, might furnish a subject for the drama more instructive, and scarcely less painful, than the detestable story of the Cenci, and this has proceeded directly from your principles.[1] It is the Atheist's Tragedy. You might have regulated your domestic arrangements, you say, quite as conveniently to yourself if you had descended to the base thoughts of the vulgar. I suppose this means that you might have annulled your marriage as having been contracted during your minority. You say that your only real crime is the holding opinions something similar to those which I once held respecting the existing state of society. That, sir, is not your crime, it would only be your error; your offence is moral as well as political, practical as well as speculative. Nor were my opinions ever similar to yours in any other point than that, desiring, as I still desire, a greater equality in the condition of men, I entertained erroneous notions concerning the nature of that improvement in society, and the means whereby it was to be promoted. Except in this light, light and darkness are not more opposite than my youthful opinions and yours. You would have found me as strongly opposed in my youth to Atheism and immorality of any kind as I am now, and to that abominable philosophy which teaches self-indulgence instead of self-control.

The Christianity which I recommended to your consideration is to be found in the Scriptures and in the Book of Common Prayer. I would fain have had you to believe that there is judgement after death, and to learn, and understand, and feel all sins may be forgiven through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. You mistake my meaning when you suppose that I

[1] Two words in the attempted Greek characters of Caroline Bowles are here indecipherable. [E. Dowden.]

wished you to be afflicted with bodily suffering: but I repeat, that any affliction which might bring you to a better mind would be a dispensation of mercy. And here, sir, our correspondence must end. I never should have sought it; but having been led into it, it appeared to me a duty to take that opportunity of representing you to yourself as you appear to me, with little hope indeed of producing any good effect, and yet not altogether hopeless; for though you may go on with an unawakened mind, a seared conscience, and a hardened heart, there will be seasons of misgivings, when that most sacred faculty which you have laboured to destroy makes itself felt. At such times you may remember me as an earnest monitor whom you cannot suspect of ill-will, and whom it is not in your power to despise, however much you may wish to repel his admonitions with contempt.—Believe me, sir, your sincere well-wisher, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

155. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, Nov. 6, 1820.

MY DEAR G.,—Your letters have troubled me; and I should have replied to the first of them without delay, if I had not expected to receive the half notes, which I now acknowledge and thank you for.

If it were at a better season of the year, I should press you to make for yourself as long a vacation as you could, and set off forthwith for Keswick, where I would answer for putting you in good condition. But in the month of November, when the paths are strewn with the fallen leaves, the roads ankle deep in mire, and the glass oscillating between rain and much rain, and only getting up to change, for the sake of verifying its accuracy by falling back again—this prescription is not applicable. Make up your mind, however, and your arrangements, to come with the cuckoo, or before him; and you will derive immediate benefit from such a resolution. No little part of the happiness of this world consists in expectation.

My dear Grosvenor, I am no ways inclined to condemn you, as you seem to imagine; nor, like the shoemaker whom we went to see in Richter's picture, to persuade you that the shoe fits, when you feel that it pinches. Only let me say, that I should be as glad as you could be to find myself in possession of a good independent fortune: and that we poor lacklands and lackstocks who have to earn our livelihood, must endeavour to make the best of it. You are better off at this time than the King or his Prime Minister. If I were in town, I would give you as much of my time as you would accept: that is, I would take my sneezes at the Exchequer at noon, and dine with you and Miss Page and the Master of the Rolls, as often as you would let me make a fourth at your party. But as this cannot be, let us, I entreat you, converse as well as we can, at a distance; and do not imagine yourself unfit for correspondence, or suffer yourself to acquire a distaste for it.

I have often, since my return from London, been vexed, as well as disappointed, at not hearing from you as usual. Your letters made up no small part of my enjoyments. You are my only *frequent* and *constant* correspondent—the only person with whom correspondence has become a *habit*; with whom I can be grave or nonsensical, to whom I can say *quidlibet de quolibet*, and make my lightest thoughts legible as they rise.

I have many things to tell you of my own occupations, anticipations, and concerns, when you are willing to hear them. At present it will suffice to say, that we are all tolerably well, and especially your godson, who calls himself *Cupn*, and puts my aunt Mary in mind of what I was five and forty years ago. Nash, who is on his way to town, has made an excellent portrait of him; a tolerable miniature of my poetship; and a double miniature of Sara and Edith which you will be much pleased with. Farewell, i.e. *fare better*.—Yours as ever.

R. S.

156. To W. Westall

Keswick, Dec. 8, 1820.

My dear Westall,—Your letter arrived yesterday, by which post, you know (being Thursday), it could not be answered. By this night's I shall write to Murray, saying that you will deliver the drawings to him, and informing him of the price. That they have in them that which is common to poetry and painting I do not doubt, and I only wish it were possible for you to engrave them yourself. The first edition of the book would then bear a high value hereafter. In describing that scene on the side of Walla Crag, I have introduced your name in a manner gratifying to my own feelings, and which I hope will not be otherwise to yours.

I am glad to hear you are employed upon your views of Winandermere. My topographical knowledge in that quarter is but imperfect; but, when you want your letter-press, if you cannot persuade Wordsworth to write it (who would be in all respects the best person) I will do for you the best I can.

Allow me to say one thing before I conclude. When you were last at Keswick there was an uncomfortable feeling in your mind towards Nash: I hope it has passed away. There is not a kinder-hearted creature in the world than he is; and I *know* that he has the truest regard for you, and the highest possible respect for your genius. Any offence that he may have given was entirely unintentional. Forget it, I entreat you: call upon him again as you were wont to do; it will rejoice him, and you will not feel the worse for having overcome the feeling of resentment. I need not apologize for saying this; for, indeed, I could not longer forbear saying it, consistent with my regard both for him and for you.

All here desire their kind remembrances. We cannot send them to Mrs. Westall, because you did not give us an opportunity of becoming known to her; but, I pray you, present our best wishes, and believe me,—
Yours affectionately, Robert Southey.

157. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Dec. 21, 1820.

My dear Grosvenor,—Poor Hyde! I am truly sorry to hear of his death. My introduction to him by you, in 1801, and the scene which followed, when he denied the existence of the coat on my back, being one of those things not to be forgotten, but now no longer to be remembered with the same kind of hilarity. By all means pay my bill to the widow; and, if the business is continued on her account, she shall have my custom —a kind of debt this which one owes to an honest man.

Now, concerning the *Vision*. You may growl as much as you like. But before you begin to put on your critical cap, observe with respect to the metre, that I write upon the postulate of using in the four first feet of the verse any foot of two or three syllables; the English hexameter in this respect bearing the same loose resemblance to the Latin, that the English heroic verse of ten syllables does to the ancient Iambic verse, after which it is sometimes called. This of course is to be explained in the preface. I have tried the verse upon ears enough to judge of its effect. Those persons who were most inclined to disapprove were shaken in their decided prejudice against it. Wynn, instead of exclaiming against the possibility of the design, objected to the quantity of one or two syllables. Bowles protested against the attempt, and acknowledged its success when he heard the first thirty lines. Wordsworth and Barry Cornwall admit it to be a legitimate English metre, noways unsuited to the language. You can answer for its effect upon your own ears. No person has thought it forced, or uncouth, or ludicrous. Recollect I do not propose it as a better metre than blank verse, any more than I should offer venison as a better thing than turtle, but as something else—there being room for both. Let it be abused, I care not. I have wished for more than twenty years to make the experiment, and the experiment reconciled me to a subject which I should otherwise not willingly have taken up.

To whom shall I dedicate it? Not to Elmsley, I think, for the reason which you gave, and which I anticipated. The great Peter, I hope, will pay me a visit next summer; and one of these days I will prefix his name to something to which he will have no dislike. When you have perused the whole, you will judge whether there be anything in the matter which would make a dedication to the King improper. If there be not I should like to do it, because my blood is up, and it would gratify me at this time to wear the King's colours. Perpend this, if it is to be done. I suppose it would be decorous to ask permission; and that I can do through Lord Wm. Gordon, or Sir Wm. Knighton. Should there be any unfitness, as perhaps there is, I may very likely address it to Wordsworth.—God bless you. R. S.

158. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

April 3, 1821.

My dear G.,—The King has desired Sir William Knighton to let me know that 'he has read the *Vision of Judgement* twice, and that he is much gratified by the dedication, and pleased with the poem'. Could you get a copy sent with the dispatches to our minister at Florence for Landor, who is at Pisa? I know not in what other manner to transmit it to him, and this is one of the uses of an ambassador. I once received at one time three folios through the Spanish ambassador from Cadiz. Landor has only seen the first paragraph, which I sent him in a letter, and it has made him a convert to the metre. This is no slight conquest, for except Wynn I had looked upon him as the person among all my friends least likely to be reconciled to it. But the verdict of my peers is most decidedly in its favour.

Now to a more important subject. You were duly apprised towards the end of the year of Othello's death. Since that lamented event this house was cat-less, till on Saturday, March 24, Mrs. Calvert, knowing how grievously we were annoyed by rats, offered me what

she described as a fine full-grown black cat, who was moreover a tom. She gave him an excellent character in all points but one, which was that he was a most expert pigeon-catcher; and as they had a pigeon-house, this propensity rendered it necessary to pass sentence upon him either of transportation or of death. Moved by compassion (his colour and his tomship also being taken into consideration), I consented to give him an asylum, and on the evening of that day here he came in a sack.

You, Grosvenor, who are a *philogalist*, and therefore understand more of cat nature than has been ever attained by the most profound naturalists, know how difficult it is to reconcile a cat to a new domicile. When the sack was opened, the kitchen door, which leads into the passage, was open also, and the cat disappeared; not indeed like a flash of lightning, but as fast as one—that is to say, for all purposes of a simile. There was no chance of his making his way back to the pigeon-house. He might have done this had he been carried thrice the distance in any other direction; but in this there was either a river to cross, or a part of the town to pass, both of which were such obstacles to his travels that we were quite sure all on this side of them was to him *terra incognita*. Food, therefore, was placed where he would be likely to find it in the night; and at the unanimous desire of the children, I took upon myself the charge of providing him with a name, for it is not proper that a cat should remain without one. Taking into consideration his complexion, as well as his sex, my first thought was to call him Henrique Diaz, a name which poor Koster would have approved, had he been living to have heard it; but it presently occurred to me that the Zombi[1] would be an appellation equally appropriate and more dignified. The Zombi, therefore, he was named.

It was soon ascertained that the Zombi had taken possession of poor Wilsey's cellar, which being filled with pea-sticks afforded him a secure hiding-place; the

[1] The title of the Chief of the Palmares negroes. See *History of Brazil*, vol. iii, p. 24.

kitchen also of that part of the house being forsaken, he was in perfect quiet. Food was laid for him every day, and the children waited impatiently for the time when the Zombi would become acquainted with the house, and suffer them to become acquainted with him. Once or twice in the evening he was seen out of doors, and it was known that he reconnoitred the premises in the night; but in obstinate retirement he continued from Saturday till Saturday, seven days and nights, notwithstanding all kind words were used to bring him out, as if he had been determined to live and die a hermit.

But between four and five o'clock on the Sunday morning, all who had ears to hear were awakened by such screams as if the Zombi had been caught in a rat-trap, or had met with some other excruciating accident. You, Mr. Bedford, understand cats, and know very well that a cat-*solo* is a very different thing from a *duet*; and that no person versed in their tongue can mistake their expression of pain for anything else. The creature seemed to be in agonies. A light was procured, that it might be relieved if that were possible. Upon searching the house, the Zombi was seen at the top of Wilsey's stairs, from whence he disappeared, retreating to his stronghold in the cellar; nor could any traces be discovered of any hurt that could have befallen him, nor has it since appeared that he had received any, so that the cause of this nocturnal disturbance remains an impenetrable mystery.

Various have been our attempts to explain it. Some of the women who measure the power of rats by their own fears, would have it that he was bitten by a rat, or by an association of rats; but to this I indignantly replied that in that case the ground would have been strewn with their bodies, and that it would have been the rats' cry, not the Zombi's, that would have been heard. Dismissing, therefore, that impossible supposition, I submit to your consideration, in the form of queries, the various possibilities which have occurred to me—all unsatisfactory, I confess—requesting you to assist me in my endeavour to find out the mystery of this

wonderful history, as it may truly be called. You will be pleased to bear in mind that the Zombi was the only cat concerned in the transaction: of that I am perfectly certain.

Now then, Grosvenor—

1. Had he seen the devil?
2. Was he making love to himself?
3. Was he engaged in single combat with himself?
4. Was he attempting to raise the devil by invocation?
5. Had he heard me sing, and was he attempting (vainly) to imitate it?

These queries, you will perceive, all proceed upon the supposition that it was the Zombi who made the noise. But I have further to ask—

6. Was it the devil?
7. Was it Jeffery?[1]
8. Were either of these personages tormenting the Zombi?

I have only to add that from that time to this he continues in the same obstinate retirement, and to assure you that

I remain,
Mr. Bedford,
With the highest consideration,
Yours as ever,
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

PS. One further query occurs while I am writing. Sunday having been the first of the month—

9. Was he making April fools of us? R. S.

159. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, Sept. 14, 1821.

DEAR STUMPARUMPER,—Don't rub your eyes at that word, Bedford, as if you were slopy. The purport of this letter, which is to be as precious as the punic scenes in Plautus, is to give you some account (though but an

[1] See note, p. 312.

imperfect one) of the language spoken in this house by [Mrs. Coleridge], and invented by her. I have carefully composed a vocabulary of it by the help of her daughter and mine, having my ivory tablets always ready when she is red-raggifying in full confabulumpatus. True it is that she has called us persecutōrums, and great improprietors for performing this meritorious task, and has often told me not to be such a stuposity; threatening us sometimes that she will never say anything that ends in lumpatus again; and sometimes that she will play the very dunder; and sometimes bidding us get away with our toadymidjerings. And she asks me, how I can be such a Tomnoddycum (though my name, as she knows, is Robert), and calls me detesty, a maffrum, a goffrum, a chatterpye, a sillycum, and a great mawkinfort.

But when she speaks of you it is with a kinder meaning. You are not a vulgărum, nor a great ovverum govverum. The appellations which she has in store for you are either words of direct endearment, or of that sort of objurgation which is the playfullest mood of kindness. Thus you are a stumparumper, because you are a shortycum; and you are a wattlykin, a tendrum, a detestabumpus, and a figurumpus. These are the words which come from her chapset when she speaks of you, and you need not be told what they signifump.

I dare say you have set up a whickerandus at this, and I hope you will not be dollatory in expressing the satisfaction which you derive from knowing that you are thus decidedly in her good graces. Perhaps you may attempt an answer in the same strain, and show yourself none of the little blunderums who deserve to be bangated, but an apt pupolion, which if you do, you will deserve to be called as clever as De Diggle.

Great light has been thrown upon the philosophy of language by Humboldt, the traveller, who, if we consider the variety and the extent of his attainments, may justly be considered as the most accomplished of living men. Mr. Duponceau, of New York, is treading in his steps. From their researches, and those of our countrymen in India, it appears that there are two

kinds of languages essentially different from those of Europe: the monosyllabic, which prevails in China and the adjacent countries; and the polysynthetic, to which the various languages of the American tribes belong. It is much to be regretted that [Mrs. Coleridge's] new language is not in like manner investigated by some profound philologist. —— perhaps, by the application of Kant's philosophy, might analyze and discover the principles of its construction. I, though a diligent and faithful observer, must confess that I have but little insight into it. I can indeed partly guess why donkeys are in the language called jacks, and why peck is a nose; why some part of an elephant's trunk is a griper, but not why it is a snipe; why nog is a lump, bungay a bundle, and why trottlykins should stand for children's feet; but not why my feet and yours should be opprobriously termed hocksen and hormangorgs. So, too, when I hear needles called nowgurs, ladies laduls, whispering twistering, vinegar wiganar, and a mist fogogrum, or fogrogrum, I have some glimpse, though but a glimpse, of the principle upon which these mologisms are fabricated. I can perceive also the analogies by which the new vocabulary is to be extended. For example, pie being called pie-īe-īe, it follows that pudding should be pudding-ūdding-ūdding. And a pew being called pewdiddledo, to be consistent, we should speak of the churchdiddledurch, the clerkdiddlederk, and the parsondiddledarson,—only that this might appear disrespectful to the vicar.

But I should in vain seek to discover the *rationale* of other parts of this speech, though I were to study the subject till I were as tired as a dog's detested hinder. And when I get at the meaning by asking an explanation, still no clue to the derivation is afforded. Thus, for instance, when it was said, 'Don't roakin there,' and I desired to know what was intended by this prohibition, the answer was 'Everybody says roakin'; and when I pressed for further information, I was informed that roaking was digging and grumping in a work-box. So, too, on the way from Mrs. Calvert's

one evening, I was desired to stop till she had gathered up her doddens, and that word was interpreted to mean a plaid, a pair of pattens, and an umbrella. If my foot happens to touch her chair, I am told that anything whidgetting the chair makes her miseraboble. If the children—the childerōapusses I should say—are bangrampating about the house, they are said to be rudderish and roughcumtatherick. Cuthbert's mouth is called sometimes a jabberumpeter, sometimes a towsalowset. When the word comfortabuttle is used, I suppose it may be designed to mean that there is comfort in a bottle. But by what imaginable process of language and association snoutarumpeter can be, as she declares it to be, a short way of calling mother, I am altogether unable to comprehend.

On one occasion, however, I was fortunate enough to see this extraordinary language in the mint, if I may so express myself, and in the very act of its coinage. Speaking of a labourer, she said—'the thumper, the what-d'ye-callder—the undoer—I can't hit upon it—the cutter-up.' These were the very words, received and noted as they came fresh from the die; and they meant a man who was chopping wood.

I must now bring this letter to a conclusion. The account indeed is very incomplete, but you may rely upon its fidelity; and though of necessity I have spelt the words according to their pronunciation, I hope that this has not occasioned any disvugurment, and that none of them in reading will stick in your thrapple. The subject cannot be so important to you as it is to me who live in a house where this language is spoken, and therefore have been obliged to pay attention to it. Yet it will not appear altogether incurious, connected as it is with the science of philology; and perhaps your regard for the inventor may give it a more than ordinary interest in your eyes.—I remain, my dear Sir, Your obedient humble servant, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

PS. I forgot to say that apple-dumple-dogs are apple dumplings, and that Dogroggarum is a word of reproach for a dog.

160. To the Rev. Neville White

Keswick, Oct. 20, 1821.

My dear Neville,—You form a just opinion of the character and tendency of William Taylor's conversation. A most unfortunate perversion of mind has made him always desirous of supporting strange and paradoxical opinions by ingenious arguments, and showing what may be said on the wrong side of a question. He likes to be in a state of doubt upon all subjects where doubt is possible, and has often said, 'I begin to be too sure of that, and must see what reasons I can find against it.' But when this is applied to great and momentous truths, the consequences are of the most fatal kind. I believe no man ever carried Pyrrhonism further. But it has never led him into immoralities of any kind, nor prevented him from discharging the duties of private life in the most exemplary manner. There never lived a more dutiful son. I have seen his blind mother weep when she spoke of his goodness; and his kindness and generosity have only been limited by his means.

What is more remarkable is, that this habitual and excessive scepticism has weakened none of the sectarian prejudices in which he was brought up. He sympathizes as cordially with the Unitarians in their animosity to the Church and State, as if he agreed with them in belief, and finds as strong a bond of union in party-spirit as he could do in principle.

With regard to his talents, they are very great. No man can exceed him in ingenuity, nor in the readiness with which he adorns a subject by apt and lively illustrations. His knowledge is extensive, but not deep. When first I saw him, three-and-twenty years ago, I thought him the best informed man with whom I had ever conversed. When I visited him last, after a lapse of eight years, I discovered the limits of his information, and that upon all subjects it was very incomplete.

Of his heart and disposition I cannot speak more

highly than I think. It is my belief that no man ever brought a kindlier nature into this world. His great talents have been sadly wasted; and, what is worse, they have sometimes been sadly misemployed. He has unsettled the faith of many, and he has prepared for his own old age a pillow of thorns. To all reasoning the pride of reason has made him inaccessible; and when I think of him, as I often do, with affection and sorrowful foreboding, the only foundation of hope is, that God is merciful, beyond our expectations, as well as beyond our deserts.

Thank you for the copy of Cromwell's Letters. The transcriber has tasked his own eyes, and mine also, by copying them in the very form of the writing. I cannot attempt to read them by candle-light. You will by this time have seen my sketch of Cromwell's Life. It is the only article of mine which was ever printed in the *Quarterly Review* without mutilation. Gifford has made only one alteration; that, however, is a very improper one. I had said that Hampden might have left behind him a *name scarcely inferior to Washington's*; and he has chosen to alter this to a *memorable name*, not calling to mind that his name *is* memorable. The sentence is thus made nonsensical. Pray restore the proper reading in your copy of the *Review*. Murray wishes me to fill up the sketch for separate publication. I am fond of biography, and shall probably one day publish a series of English lives. I spent a week lately at Lowther Castle, and employed all my mornings in reading and extracting from a most extensive collection of pamphlets of Cromwell's age. God bless you, my dear friend! —Yours very affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

161. To JOHN MAY

Keswick, Dec. 10, 1821.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is not often that I allow myself to wish the accidents of fortune had been more in my favour, and that I were in possession of that property

which, in the just ordinary course of things, ought to have devolved upon me; but I cannot help feeling that wish now.

By this post I write to Bedford, desiring that he will transfer to you £625 in the three-per-cents. I wish it was more, and that I had more at command in any way. I shall in the spring, if I am paid for the first volume of my history as soon as it is finished. One hundred I should, at all events, have sent you then. It shall be as much more as I may receive.

One word more. I entreat you break away from business if it be possible, as early in the spring as you can, and put yourself in the mail for this place. Though you cannot leave your anxieties behind you, yet you may, by means of change of air and scene, be assisted in bearing them, and lay in here a store of pleasant recollections, which in all moods of mind are wholesome.

I cannot write to you about indifferent things, troubled as you needs must be, and sympathizing as I must do with you. Yet I trust that you now know the extent of the evil; and that when this storm is weathered, there may be prosperity and comfort in store for one who so eminently deserves them. God bless you, my dear friend!—Yours most affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

162. To BERNARD BARTON

Keswick, Jan. 27, 1822.

MY DEAR SIR,—I should have answered your letter yesterday, if it had not found me with six proof-sheets on the table, three of Kirke White's, and three of my own.

Both of your dedications are very good—the second very beautiful, though a little hurt by the alteration: the alteration, however, is advisable; not that it would give offence, but that it is right to avoid anything which might maliciously be pointed out as offensive. The volume cannot be presented more fitly than by

Sir Augustus Frazer. I have no doubt but that the king will be gratified by it.

I was much pleased with the poet's lot—no, not with his lot; but with the verses in which he describes it. But, let me ask you, are you not pursuing your studies intemperately, and to the danger of your health? To be writing 'long after midnight', and 'with a miserable headache', is what no man can do with impunity; and what no pressure of business, no ardour of composition, has ever made me do. I beseech you remember the fate of Kirke White; and remember that if you sacrifice your health (not to say your life) in the same manner, you will be held up in your own community as a warning—not as an example for imitation. The spirit which disturbed poor Scott of Amwell in his last illness will fasten upon your name, and your fate will be instanced to prove the inconsistency of your pursuits with that sobriety and evenness of mind which Quakerism requires, and is intended to produce.

You will take this as it is meant, I am sure.

My friend, go early to bed; and if you eat suppers, read afterwards, but never compose, that you may lie down with a quiet intellect. There is an intellectual as well as a religious peace of mind; and without the former be assured there can be no health for a poet. God bless you.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

163. To WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Keswick, May 27, 1822.

MY DEAR LANDOR,—I shall rejoice to see your *Dialogues*. Mine are consecutive, and will have nothing of that dramatic variety of which you will make the most. My plan grew out of Boethius, though it has since been so modified that the origin would not be suspected. The personage who visits me is Sir Thomas More, as one who recognizes in me some *dyspathics*, but more points of agreement. This age is as climacteric

as that in which he lived; in fact we are beginning now to perceive the whole effects of the three great events of his age—the invention of printing, the Reformation, and the discovery of America. You see what a canvas I have taken, if I can but fill up the sketch. By way of relief, I introduce some of the dialogues with local scenery, and perhaps I may insert some verses.

The first volume of my *History* is delayed by the printer. My part is so nearly done, that it will be finished before this reaches you. Give me in your next a direction whither to send it. By that time I hope the printer will nearly have done his work. The *Vision* and some smaller things will go with it. Humboldt's *Travels* (which you will read with great interest), and two little volumes which Wordsworth sends you—the one a series of sonnets (*Ecclesiastical Sketches* he calls them), the other, poems which he produced during a short tour on the Continent.

The complaint in Wordsworth's eyes is a serious inconvenience to him; but it threatens nothing worse. I have been greatly alarmed about him this week, by hearing that he had a dreadful fall from a horse; but to-day we learn that he is well. The horse ran away with him, and threw him against a wall. His head was cut, and bled profusely, which possibly prevented worse consequences. Chantrey has made a noble bust of him. Augustus Hare showed me yesterday what you had written of Wordsworth in a letter to his brother. It is a great pleasure to me when I meet with a person who knows your writings, and can talk with me about them, and about you.

You have, I suppose, seen or heard of the decorous manner in which Lord Byron resented my comments upon the satanic school of poetry, and of the manner in which he introduced your name. I believe he will take the advice I gave him in reply, and not meddle with me again in prose.

We are going on in this country fast and quickly towards Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary

Reform; both, I think, must, at no distant time, be carried, and either one will suffice to overthrow our institutions. The only question is whether the Church or State goes first; the trunk will not remain long upon one leg when the other is lopt. The end, of course, must be a stronger Government, though God only knows through what evil it will be reached, and in what sacrifice it must be purchased. In the days of Charles I there was some consolation in falling before the mighty: such men as Pym, Hampden, Milton, &c. But to see the work of ruin effected by such people as B—— and H——, C—— H—— and the house of R——, it is like seeing a temple pulled down by wretches who could not have been thought worthy to carry a hod for the masons at the building.

Would that the means for raising a fallen nation were as efficacious, and as sure, as those which are employed for overthrowing the fabric of our greatness! We might then look with more hope toward Spain, Portugal, and the far more degraded Italians; for in the two former countries the degradation has been of the State, not of the people. One day I hope you will give us your recollections of Italy.

The French have not yet had enough of St. Domingo. They have actually made an attempt to establish themselves in the Spanish part of the island; and it is said that they intend to restore the Slave Trade openly, which they have always carried on in an underhand way. This is quite worthy of them. If they send an army from Europe against the island, I hope it will be numerous enough to give the pestilence full scope. They are an incorrigible people, incapable of any shame.

I am going on myself quietly and contentedly, with no other disquietude than what arises from the occasional illness of one or other of my children; more especially my little boy. He has just recovered from a bilious attack, which is the disease in this country most incident to children. But he is a fine, joyous creature; an object of the greatest hope—if I could

look upon him without fear. Yours will have the advantage of acquiring two languages at once, with equal facility.—God bless you. R. S.

164. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

June 8, 1822.

My dear Grosvenor,—I received your letter with as much pleasure as a man most desperately uncomfortable in his bodily feelings could derive from anything. My *catarrh* of this year deserves to be called a *cat-a-mountain-arrh*. The extreme heat of the weather aggravates it. I spend about half my time on the sofa, with my eyes shut, and the other half in blowing my nose. Nothing ails my eyes but the weakness which this violent cold produces. However, my spirits are not a jot the worse, and Mrs. Coleridge can bear testimony that I practise all varieties of intonation in sneezing. She can testify also that I never sneeze like a sneaker! No! I let the house, and the town, and the mountain echoes hear me.

Oh! Grosvenor, is it not a pity that two men who love nonsense so cordially, and naturally, and *bona-fidically*, as you and I, should be three hundred miles asunder! For my part, I insist upon it that there is no sense so good as your honest genuine nonsense. Read, for instance, a pamphlet of Mr. Ricardo's, or a treatise of Dugald Stewart's, or a criticism upon it in the *Quarterly Review*—or an agricultural report from a committee of the House of Commons, with the evidence at full length, or a debate upon the said report—and then tell me whether five minutes of the *Butler* is not worth the whole existence of all the political economists, metaphysicians, and critics that ever consumed time and paper! Is the counsellor's, the bishop's, the speaker's, the chancellor's wig so respectable a covering for the head as the cap and bells? Counsellors? judges? bishops? speakers? chancellors? has there been ever any lack of them? any scarcity of heads to wear becomingly their full-buckled honours? But why

have the cap and bells disappeared from Court? Why—but because these degenerate ages produce none worthy to succeed to it. The King can confer dignity: he can create knight, baronet, baron, viscount, earl, marquis, and duke; but he cannot create a FOOL. He can find fellows by the dozen to talk sense, or what passes for it, in the House of Commons, but where will he find one who can talk nonsense to the purpose? And is there any of his ministers who do him half so much service in Parliament as a good fool would do there?

For myself, I have the honour to be his Majesty's poet, and I am also poet to my own son—your godson, who says the reason why he has no tail is because he is a small homo, and homos have no tails. In the discharge of this latter office (the pleasanter of the two) I have lately composed the following descriptive poem, which I hope may please godfather as well as it pleases godson.

'How does the water come down at Lowdore?' &c., &c. —God bless you. R. S.

165. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, July 12, 1822.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—My old friend Lightfoot is with me, whom you remember at Oxford, and whom I had not seen since we parted upon leaving Oxford eight-and-twenty years ago. The communication between us had never been broken. I had a great regard for him, and talked of him often and oftener thought of him; and, as you may suppose, the more I became known and talked of in the world, the larger part I occupied in his thoughts. So at length he mustered up resolution to make a journey hither from Crediton during his midsummer holidays, being master of the grammar school there.

He declares me to be less altered in appearance and manners than any man whom he ever saw. I should not have known him; and yet he has worn better

than I have; but he is thinner, and altogether less than when he was a young man, and his face has lengthened, partly because he has lost some of his hair. His life has been laborious, uniform, successful, and singularly happy.

He trembled like an aspen leaf at meeting me. A journey to Cumberland is to him as formidable a thing as it would be for me to set off for Jerusalem, so little has he been used to locomotion. And he has shocked Edith May by wishing that the mountains would descend to fill up the lakes and vales, because then I should return to the south and be within reach of him.

The only thing short of this which would be likely to remove me from this country, would be, if upon Gifford's giving up the management of the *Quarterly Review*, it were to be offered me and made worth my acceptance. In that case I should probably from prudential reasons think it proper to accept the offer, and fix myself within ten or twelve miles of town. But this is not likely, and I am not sure that it would be desirable.

What a pleasure it is in declining life to see the friends of our youth such as we should wish them to be; and how infinitely greater will be the pleasure of meeting them in another world, where progression in beatitude will be the only change!—God bless you! my dear Grosvenor. R. S.

166. To the Rev. Nicholas Lightfoot

Keswick, Sept. 16, 1822.

My dear Lightfoot,—The General has lately had a narrow, though ludicrous escape. He upset himself with an umbrella in a little skiff which Sir Frederick Moreshead had given him. It was within hearing of his own island. The skiff was corked so that it could not sink, but being half full of water after he had righted it, it was not possible for him to get in, and he being well buttoned up against a stormy day in a thick great-

coat was in no plight for swimming, so he held on and holload stoutly for assistance. His two men hastened off in his little boat, the large one happening to be on the opposite shore. The General had presence of mind enough to consider that if he attempted to get into the little boat he should in all likelihood pull her under water, and that neither of the men could swim; he therefore very coolly directed them to take the rope of the skiff and tow it to the island with him at the end; and in this way he came in like a Triton, waving his hat round his head, and huzzaing as he approached his own shores. I ought to have told you that there came an invitation from him for you to dinner the day after your departure.

John May left me this day fortnight, and Dr. Bell departed some days after him. The exercise which I took with him completed the good work which was begun with you, and has left me in a better state than I had been in for the two last years. By way of keeping it up while the season permits (nothing being so salutary to me as vigorous exercise) I went up Skiddaw Dod this morning—one of the expeditions which is reserved for your next visit; on my return I found a letter from my brother Henry, saying he shall be here on Wednesday. This will give me ten days more of laking and mountaineering, if the weather permit.

The temptation which the country holds out to that exercise which is peculiarly necessary for me must be weighed among the many reasons for remaining in it. For with my sedentary habits and inactive inclinations I require every inducement to draw me out. But whether I remain or remove I shall see you, my dear Lightfoot, often again (God willing) both in Devonshire and wherever I may be. I shall certainly come down to you when next I visit London, which will probably be in February or March.

During the little time I had for business I have written about half a paper for the *Quarterly*, upon a history of the Religious Sects of the last century, by the ex-Bishop Gregoire. The book is curious for

its strange mixture of revolutionary feelings with Catholic bigotry, and for the account which it gives of irreligion in France. It gives me matter for an interesting paper, to be wound up with some seasonable observations upon the progress of infidelity at home. God bless you, my dear Lightfoot!—Yours affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

167. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, Oct. 18, 1822.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—Your letter gave me the greatest pleasure, enhanced by knowing that the promptitude and manner in which a promotion so just and proper in itself has been granted must have been *owing to Wynn*.[1] I never doubted his hearty desire to be of real service to you, whenever it should be in his power. Tell me the designation of your office. Long may you live to fulfil its duties, and to enjoy the remuneration to which you will be rightly entitled whenever you are weary of them, and choose to amuse yourself in your own way for the rest of your life.

Poor Gifford! The state of his health must make him think seriously of appointing a king of the Romans; and, between ourselves, neither he nor Murray-le-Magne are aware of how much depends upon the choice. You will not let what I am about to say to you go further. Murray has a great many enemies, especially in his own trade; and the *Quarterly Review* has disgusted a great many persons who were by principle strongly disposed to be its friends. They are offended by its wretched inconsistency upon many points; by criticisms which are often as ill-tempered and unmanly as they are unjust; and by its silence concerning Lord Byron, which is not the less scandalous in such a journal, because Murray is implicated with him in the disgrace which must attach to every person concerned in bringing forth *Don Juan*. In the event of Gifford's *decession*, or decease, a new *Quarterly Review* has been talked of,

[1] 'It was not.' Note in G. C. B.'s handwriting. (Warter's note.)

unless he should be succeeded by a person who would make the existing one what it ought to be in point of consistency, and high, uncompromising principle. That it may be started with advantage, A. is ready to move to the west end of the town; and I am assured that if I would take the management, he would secure me £500 a year, give me half the profits above that sum, whatever they might be, and vest the copyright in me. Coadjutors on whom I could rely, and such as I should choose, are ready. This has been communicated to me by John Coleridge. My wish is that he should be Gifford's successor; and upon this point I wrote to Gifford, as he has probably told you. Should that arrangement take place, this scheme falls to the ground at once; otherwise—though it is by no means likely that I should accede to it, so as to change my residence and act as editor—it is very probable that it will be tried. And the *Quarterly Review* might be as much shaken by it as the *Edinburgh* has been by the *Quarterly Review*.

I have returned no answer to John Coleridge; because, though it would be far more congenial to my habits, desires, and feelings to withdraw from periodical and temporary literature altogether, rather than engage in it more deeply, still the prospect of a certain income is not hastily to be rejected by one whose means are so precarious as mine, at my age. Murray's conduct has not been such as to make me feel bound to him in the slightest degree; and no future editor shall ever treat my papers as Gifford has done.

Enough of this. Pray send me the remaining sheets of my first volume, that I may get it put in boards, and enjoy the satisfaction of seeing it complete, and in a *tangible shape*. At present I am working (hard as any clerk in a public office after a motion for papers) upon a boxful of papers from Frere; all which I have to read and *exenterate*, not to use so coarse a word as *gut*. As soon as the task is performed, the second volume will go on briskly. I am keeping up my course of exercise in due obedience to Osiris.[1] How should

[1] Probably a nickname for his brother, Dr. Henry Southey.

I ever do this in a tame country? To-day I have been up Latrigg; yesterday, along the terrace which runs under Skiddaw; the day before, up Walla Woods, to the summit of the crag. The improvement in my health is surprising. At present, indeed, I am once more a sound man.

Thank God we are all well. I wish you could see your godson, the archbishop-in-rus. I am learning Danish, and take a good dose of Dutch every night after supper with my black-currant rum; and I am as noisy as ever—a sure sign that all within is well.—God bless you, my dear Grosvenor. R. S.

168. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Dec. 20, 1822.

My dear G.,—I have no written form of admission to the office of Laureate, and very well remember being surprised at the thoroughly unceremonious manner of my induction. At the day and hour appointed (a very memorable one, the Prince Regent going to Parliament just after the news of the battle of Leipsic had been made public), I went to a little low, dark room in the purlieus of St. James's, where a fat old gentleman-usher, in full buckle, administered an oath to me, in presence of a solitary clerk; and that was all, payment of fees excepted, which was not made at the time. Walter Scott, I recollect, was amused at the description which I sent him of this ceremony, and said it was a judgement upon me for inserting among the Notes to the *Cid* a reflection of Sir John Finett's upon the 'superstition of a gentleman-usher'. Whether any entry was made, and whether I signed my name, I cannot call to mind, it being nine years ago. Gazetted, however, I was, and P. L. I have been from that time. But how can this concern you?

You know the proverb, that he who is not handsome at twenty, wise at forty, and rich at fifty, will never be rich, wise, or handsome. *Quoad* my handsomeness—handsome is as handsome does, and what

ever I may have been, they have made a pretty figure of me in magazines. There is a portrait in a German edition of my smaller poems, which it will be a treat for you to see. You will never again complain of your ugly likeness below stairs. Concerning the second part of the adage, certain it is that about the age of forty my views upon all important subjects were matured and settled, so that I am not conscious of their having undergone any change since, except in slight modifications upon inferior points. But for the last part of the story—rich at fifty—I certainly shall not be, nor in the way to be so.

When I deliberated, if deliberating it can be called, about the *Quarterly Review*, the single motive on one side was the desire of having an adequate and sure income, which I have never had since I discontinued the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, because it ceased to pay me for my work. My establishment requires £600 a year, exclusive of other calls. The average produce of my account with Longman is about £200; what I derive from the Exchequer you know; the rest must come from the grey goose quill; and the proceeds of a new book have hitherto pretty generally been anticipated. They may float me for a second year perhaps. *Roderick* did for three years, with the help of the *Pilgrimage*—then the tide ebbs, and so I go on. At present it is neap tide in the Row. My tale of *Paraguay*, when I can finish it, will about make it high water.

This is all very well, while I am well; but if any of the countless ills which flesh is heir to should affect my health, eyesight, or faculties, I should instantly be thrown into a state in which my income would only amount to about half my expenditure. Concerning death I have no anxieties. On that score I am easy, and not uneasy upon any other. But I have said all this to explain why it was that I could even ask myself the question whether it would become me to take the *Quarterly Review* into my own hands. I am quite satisfied that it would not; but that it behoves me

to go on, as I have always hitherto done, hopefully, contentedly, and thankfully, taking no further care for the morrow than that of endeavouring always to be able to say, sufficient for the day hath been the work thereof.

I have made a valiant resolution that the produce of this *History* shall not be touched for current expenses, looking to it always as the work wherewith I was to begin to make myself independent. The *Book of the Church* I must eat, but I will not eat these Peninsular quartos. The Whigs may nibble at them if they please.

I have just received an official communication from Sir William Knighton, which, though it be marked *private*, there can be no unfitness in my communicating to you. It is in these words, 'I am commanded by the King to convey to you the estimation in which His Majesty holds your distinguished talents, and the usefulness and importance of your literary labours. I am further commanded to add, that His Majesty receives with great satisfaction the first volume of your valuable work on the late Peninsular War.' This is the letter, and at the head of it is written—'entirely approved. G. R.' Is not this very gracious? and how many persons there are whom such a communication would make quite happy. For myself I am sorry there are so few persons connected with me who can be gratified by it, and wish my good Aunt Mary had been here to have enjoyed it. I may deposit it with my letters affiliatory from the Cymmrodorion, &c., and I might write upon the packet that contains them, *vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas.* Not that I would be understood as affecting, in the slightest degree, to undervalue what I am continually labouring to deserve.—God bless you! R. S.

169. To the Right Hon. C. W. W. Wynn, M.P.

Keswick, Jan. 25, 1823.

My dear Wynn,—I had talked over just such a plan of emigration as this last summer with Clarkson, who had shipped off two or three families to Canada at the

parish expense from his own parish, Playford, near Ipswich. The parish were convinced that it was good economy to rid themselves, by an immediate outlay, of an increasing expense. This is a proof that the plan is practicable, and likely to succeed: and in this case the parties went without any promise of land, to seek their own maintenance where industry is sure to find it.

Is not the proposed grant of 100 acres too large for this class of persons? This is boon enough for a farmer. A discretionary power of allotment up to that amount might, perhaps, be vested in the commissioners, according to the character of the emigrants.

An outcry will be raised against it as a scheme for *transporting* the poor; but it is not likely to do much harm. Indeed, the views upon this subject which I mean to bring forward in my *Dialogues* are, that, while for age and infirmity more ought to be done than our poor-laws ever have provided, if the country is compelled to feed able-bodied paupers, it thereby acquires the right of transporting them to any place where that can be done at the easiest rate, or where the necessity for doing it may be removed.

In the case of orphans and bastards, this, I think, might be acted upon now with good effect, both for the children and the workhouses.

I hope and trust that provision will be made for a clergyman in every township.

Your packet was dated on the wrong day. I congratulated myself that this was not the case with the *Cambro-Briton*. Why is it that other public offices do not, like the Treasury, omit the date on their franks? It is perfectly useless where there is no limitation of numbers, and Mr. Freeling never uses it himself.

Read *Elia*, if the book has not fallen in your way. It is by my old friend, Charles Lamb. There are some things in it which will offend, and some which will pain you, as they do me; but you will find in it a rich vein of pure gold.

I am glad to see that Arbuthnot leaves the Treasury and that Herries goes there; because I believe you

will exchange a most inefficient person for a very fit one.

You will not find any person to accept your bishopric who has good hopes of advancement at home; nor easily a proper person, unless he has somewhat of a missionary spirit. I think —— will not go, and doubt whether his formal and cold manners would not unfit him for it. His very approach benumbs one, like the touch of a torpedo.—God bless you, R. S.

170. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Feb. 23, 1823.

My dear Grosvenor,—Your letter comes in aid of a purpose which I had entertained, of putting together what I have said upon the Catholic question in the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, recasting it, and publishing it, with some needful additions, in the form of a pamphlet. About a week ago, I put down in my notebook the first sketch of an arrangement, and actually began to compose what I have to say, as a letter to some M.P.; not that it was meant to be addressed to any individual one; but having argued with Wilberforce and Sir Thomas Acland upon the subject, I knew in what light they considered it. The course which affairs have taken in Ireland will, probably, have the good effect of quashing the question for this year; and in that hope I am willing to postpone my own purpose till a season which may be more convenient to myself, and when aid of this kind may be more needed.

The arguments lie in a nutshell. The restraints which exclude the Catholics from political power are not the cause of the perpetual disorder in Ireland; their removal, therefore, cannot be the cure. Suppose the question carried, two others grow from it, like two heads from the hydra's neck, when one is amputated—a Catholic establishment for Ireland, at which Irish Catholics *must* aim, and which those who desire rebellion and separation will promote—a rebellion must be the sure consequence of agitating this.

The people of Ireland care nothing for emancipation —why should they? but make it a question for restoring the Catholic Church, and they will enter into it as zealously as ever our ancestors did into a crusade.

The other question arises at home, and brings with it worse consequences than anything which can happen among the potatoes. The repeal of the Test Act will be demanded, and must be granted. Immediately the Dissenters will get into the corporations everywhere. *Their* members will be returned; men as hostile to the Church and to the monarchy as ever were the Puritans of Charles's age. The Church property will be attacked in Parliament, as it is now at mob-meetings, and in Radical newspapers; reform in Parliament will be carried; and then farewell, a long farewell, to all our greatness.

Our constitution consists of Church and State, and it is an absurdity in politics to give those persons power in the *State*, whose duty it is to subvert the *Church*. This argument is unanswerable. I am in good hopes that my *Book of the Church* will do yeoman's service upon the question.—God bless you! R. S.

171. To George Ticknor

Keswick, July 16, 1823.

My dear Sir,—If, as I trust, you have received my first volume of the *Peninsular War*, and the lithographic views which my friend, William Westall, has engraved to accompany it, you will perceive that negligent as I have been in delaying so long to thank you for the books, and to reply to your welcome letter, I had not been wholly unmindful of you. Without attempting to excuse a delay for which I have long reproached myself, I may say that it has been chiefly, if not wholly, occasioned by an expectation that I might have communicated to you Gifford's retirement from the management of the *Quarterly Review*, and the assumption of that management by a friend of

mine, who would have given it a consistent tone upon all subjects. Poor Gifford was for several months in such a state that his death was continually looked for. His illness has thrown the journal two numbers in arrear; he feels and acknowledges his inability to conduct it, and yet his unwillingness to part with a power which he cannot exercise has hitherto stood in the way of any other arrangement.

I have more than once remonstrated both with him and Murray upon the folly and mischief of their articles respecting America; and should the journal pass into the hands of any person whom I can influence, its temper will most assuredly be changed. Such papers, the silence of the journal upon certain topics on which it ought manfully to have spoken out, and the abominable style of its criticism upon some notorious subjects, have made me more than once think seriously of withdrawing from it; and I have only been withheld by the hope of its amendment, and the certainty that through this channel I could act with more immediate effect than through any other. Inclosed you have a list of all my papers in it. I mean shortly to see whether Murray is willing to reprint such of them as are worth preserving, restoring where I can the passages which Gifford (to the sore mutilation of the part always, and sometimes to the destruction of the sense and argument) chose to omit—and beginning with the Moral and Political Essays.

Your friends and countrymen who come to Keswick make a far shorter tarriance than I could wish. They 'come like shadows, so depart'. Dr. Channing could give me only part of a short evening. Randolph of Roanoak no more: he left me with a promise that if he returned from Scotland by the western side of the island, he would become my guest: if he could have been persuaded to this, it would have done him good, for he stood in need of society, and of those comforts which are not to be obtained at an inn. Mr. Eliot passed through about five weeks ago, and on Monday last we had a younger traveller here—

Mr. Gardner. No country can send out better specimens of its sons.

Coleridge talks of bringing out his work upon Logic, of collecting his poems, and of adapting his translation of *Wallenstein* for the stage—Kean having taken a fancy to exhibit himself in it. Wordsworth is just returned from a trip to the Netherlands: he loves rambling, and has no pursuits which require him to be stationary. I shall probably see him in a few days. Every year shows more and more how strongly his poetry has leavened the rising generation. Your mocking-bird is said to improve the strain which he imitates; this is not the case with ours.

Nov. 2, 1823.

I conclude this too long delayed letter on the eve of my departure for London. From thence, in the course of the next month, I shall send you the *Book of the Church*. Gifford is so far recovered that he hopes to conduct the *Review* to the sixtieth number. I have sent him the commencement of a paper upon Dwight's book, which I shall finish in town. The first part is a review of its miscellaneous information; the second will examine the points of difference between an old country and a new one, the advantages and disadvantages which each has to hope and to fear, and the folly of supposing that the institutions which suit the one must necessarily be equally suitable to the other.

Farewell, my dear Sir. Remember me to Alston and my other New England friends; and be assured that to them and to their country I shall always do justice in thought, word, and deed. God bless you! —Yours with sincere esteem, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

172. To CAROLINE BOWLES

Kirkby Lonsdale, November 4, 1823.

WE left home yesterday, and are now at Kirkby Lonsdale, waiting for weather that may allow us to see the Caves; for, from the time of our departure till

this moment it has not ceased raining. The same ill fortune which persecuted you at Ambleside seems fated to attend us. The females, however, are company for each other; they have taken out their work; and the opportunity is favourable for performing a part of mine, which is to ask you whether one of those day-dreams to which you have given birth (a very delightful one to me it is) shall come to pass?

I have put up among my papers the memoranda which were made many years ago for a poem upon Robin Hood. They are easily shaped into a regular plan, and, in my judgement, a promising one. Will you form an intellectual union with me that it may be executed? We will keep our own secret as well as Sir Walter Scott has done. Murray shall publish it, and not know the whole mystery that he may make the more of it, and the result will be means in abundance for a summer's abode at Keswick, and an additional motive for it that we may form other schemes of the same nature. Am I dreaming when I think that we may derive from this much high enjoyment, and that you may see in the prospect something which is worth living for? The secret itself would be delightful while we thought proper to keep it; still more so the spiritual union which death would not part.

Now on your side there must be no hesitation from diffidence. You can write as easily and as well as I can plan. You are as well acquainted with forest scenery, and with whatever is required for the landscape part, as I am with the manners of the time. You will comprehend the characters as distinctly as I have conceived them; when we meet we will sort the parts so as each to take the most suitable, and I will add to yours, and you to mine, whatever may improve it. Beaumont and Fletcher composed plays together with such harmony of style, thought, and feeling that no critic has ever been able to determine what parts were written by one and what by the other. Why should not R. S. and C. A. B. succeed as happily in the joint execution of a poem?

As there can be no just cause or impediment why these two persons should not be thus joined together, tell me that you consent to the union, and I will send you the rude outline of the story and of the characters. Direct to me at Sir G. Beaumont's, Bart., Cole-Orton Hall, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, where I expect to arrive on Monday next, and to remain till the Friday.—Dear friend, God bless you. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

173. To CHARLES LAMB

Nov. 19, 1823.

MY DEAR LAMB,—On Monday I saw your letter in the *London Magazine*, which I had not before had an opportunity of seeing, and I now take the first interval of leisure for replying to it.

Nothing could be further from my mind than any intention or apprehension of any way offending or injuring a man concerning whom I have never spoken, thought, or felt otherwise than with affection, esteem, and admiration.

If you had let me know in any private or friendly manner that you felt wounded by a sentence in which nothing but kindness was intended—or that you found it might injure the sale of your book—I would most readily and gladly have inserted a note in the next *Review* to qualify and explain what had hurt you.

You have made this impossible, and I am sorry for it. But I will not engage in controversy with you to make sport for the Philistines.

The provocation must be strong indeed that can rouse me to do this, even with an enemy. And if you can forgive an unintended offence as heartily as I do the way in which you have resented it, there will be nothing to prevent our meeting as we have heretofore done, and feeling towards each other as we have always been wont to do.

Only signify a correspondent willingness on your part, and send me your address, and my first business next week shall be to reach your door, and shake hands

with you and your sister. Remember me to her most kindly and believe me—Yours with unabated esteem and regard, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

174. C. LAMB TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

E. I. H., Nov. 21, 1823.

DEAR SOUTHEY,—The kindness of your note has melted away the mist which was upon me. I have been fighting against a shadow. That accursed *Q.R.* had vexed me by a gratuitous speaking, of its own knowledge, that the Confessions of a D——d was a genuine description of the state of the writer. Little things, that are not ill-meant, may produce much ill. *That* might have injured me alive and dead. I am in a public office and my life is insured. I was prepared for anger, and I thought I saw, in a few obnoxious words, a hard case of repetition directed against me. I wish both magazine and review at the bottom of the sea. I shall be ashamed to see you, and my sister (though innocent) will be still more so; for the folly was done without her knowledge, and has made her uneasy ever since. My guardian angel was absent at that time.

I will muster up courage to see you, however, any day next week (Wednesday excepted). We shall hope that you will bring Edith with you. That will be a second mortification. She will hate to see us; but come and heap embers. We deserve it; I for what I've done, and she for being my sister.

Do come early in the day, by sunlight, that you may see my *Milton*.

I am at Colebrook Cottage, Colebrook Row, Islington: a detached whitish house, close to the New River end of Colebrook Terrace, left hand from Sadler's Wells.

Will you let me know the day before?—Your penitent, C. LAMB.

PS. I do not think your handwriting at all like ——'s. I do not think many things I did think.

175. To Edith May Southey

London, Tuesday, Dec. 30, 1823.

My dear Daughter,—I have sent you a Bible for a New Year's gift, in the hope that with the New Year you will begin the custom of reading, morning and night, the Psalms and Lessons for the day. It is far from my wish that this should be imposed as a necessary and burthensome observance, or that you should feel dissatisfied and uneasy at omitting it, when late hours or other accidental circumstances render it inconvenient. Only let it be your ordinary custom. You will one day understand feelingly how beneficially the time has been employed.

The way which I recommend is, I verily believe, the surest way of profiting by the Scriptures. In the course of this easy and regular perusal, the system of religion appears more and more clear and coherent, its truths are felt more intimately, and its precepts and doctrines reach the heart as slow showers penetrate the ground. In passages which have repeatedly been heard and read, some new force, some peculiar meaning, some home application which had before been overlooked, will frequently come out, and you will find, in thus recurring daily to the Bible, as you have done among the lakes and mountains which you love so well, in the Word of God, as in his works, beauties and effects, and influences as fresh as they are inexhaustible. I say this from experience. May God bless the book to the purpose for which it is intended! and take you with it, my dear dear child, the blessing of—
Your affectionate father, Robert Southey.

176. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Feb. 23, 1824.

My dear Grosvenor,—Here then I am, nothing the worse for having been wheeled over fifteen hundred miles in the course of fifteen weeks. I no longer feel the

effect of motion in my head, nor of jolting in my tail. I have taken again to my old coat and old shoes; dine at the reasonable hour of four, enjoy as I used to do the wholesome indulgence of a nap after dinner, drink tea at six, sup at half-past nine, spend an hour over a sober folio and a glass of black-currant rum with warm water and sugar, and then to bed. Days seemed like weeks while I was away, so many and so various were my engagements; and now that I am settling to my wonted round of occupations, the week passes like a day. If my life is not like that of the *prisca gens mortalium*, it is quite as happy; and when you hear *Qui fit Maecenas* quoted, you may reply that you know one man at least who is perfectly contented with his lot.

I was charged by Edith particularly to describe to her how Mrs. Coleridge looked when the fatal horn should first be exhibited to her astonished eyes. The task which my daughter imposed upon me my powers of language are not sufficient to discharge. The horn, I must tell you, was made useful as a case for Westall's lithographic print of Warwick Castle. The Doctor packed it carefully up with my umbrella in brown paper, so that no person could possibly discover what the mysterious package contained; and great curiosity was excited when it was first observed at home. Mrs. C. stood by (I sent for her) while the unpacking was deliberately performed. The string was untied, not cut; I unbound it round after round; and then methodically took off the paper. The first emotion was an expression of contemptuous disappointment at sight of the umbrella, which I was careful should be first discovered. But when the horn appeared, the fatal horn, then, oh, then ——

Grosvenor, it was an expression of dolorous dismay which Richter or Wilkie could hardly represent unless they had witnessed it—it was at once so piteous and so comical. Up went the brows, down went the chin, and yet the face appeared to widen as much as it was elongated, by an indefinable drawing of the lips which

seemed to flatten all the features. I know not whether sorrow or resentment predominated in the eyes; sorrow as in the Dutch manner, she pitied herself; or anger when she thought of me, and of your brother from whom I received the precious gift; and whose benevolence I loudly lauded. She wished him at Mo-ko (where that is, I know not), and me she wished to a worse place, if any worse there be. In the midst of her emotion I called upon Sarah to observe her well, saying that I was strictly charged by my daughter to make a faithful and full report. The comical wrath which this excited added in no slight degree to the rich effect. Here I blew a blast, which, though not worthy of King Ramiro, was, nevertheless, a good blast. Out she ran: and yet finally, which I hold to be the greatest triumph of my art, I reconciled her to the horn; yes, reconciled her to it, by reminding her that rats might be driven away by it, according as it is written in the story of Jeffery.[1]

God bless you, Grosvenor! I should probably have prattled through the remainder of the sheet, but a parcel from the Row has arrived, and that always occasions an evening of dissipation.—Yours affectionately, R. S.

177. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, Saturday, Feb. 28, 1824.

I TOLD you before you received my letter I should have returned to my old habit of writing verses before breakfast (at which time nine-tenths at least of *Thalaba*, *Madoc*, *Kehama*, and *Roderick* were written). I began on Thursday, and in three mornings have produced—what you see. Five-and-twenty years ago I should have written three times as much in one. Without inquiring whether what is lost in measure is gained in weight, there is satisfaction enough in knowing that even at this rate a long poem may be completed in twelve months; and that if I hold on (as I *will* do, provided you bear your part), and you keep pace with

[1] See *Life of Wesley*, vol. i, p. 445.

me, half that time will complete our purpose, and we may publish at the close of the year.

I have not patience to proceed further with the first canto before I send you what is already written. You have here a beginning which, when I receive a copy of the book 'from the author', I shall gravely pronounce to be a very good imitation of my own manner, and honestly add that it is quite as good as I could produce myself. The fragments shall be forwarded to you as I proceed, written all in the same form for convenience of arrangement. Now, dear Caroline, go you to work with the same mind and the same will, and we shall build something more durable, if not more beautiful, than the best castle that either of us has ever erected, great architects as we both have been in that line.—God bless you. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

It is needless to say that the sample which you receive now needs polishing in some places. You will feel, as I do, when it fails to satisfy the ear or to express the thought felicitously.

178. To CAROLINE BOWLES

Keswick, April 24, 1824.

IF I were to wait some ten days or a fortnight, I should convince you in a very effectual manner that the grand alliance is not at an end, by sending you back the substance of your own lines in another form. You shall see them taken up and recast, when the first canto is finished; but I will not delay telling you that you must not be disheartened because you have failed to satisfy yourself with your first lesson in a new style of art. It is what would happen to you in music or in painting.

That it is difficult to fall into this mode of versification I believe, because you find it so, and because one other person who, though not like yourself, a poet in heart and soul, rhymes with sufficient ease and dexterity, made an attempt and failed in it. But that it is of all modes the easiest, when once acquired, I am perfectly

certain, and so you will find it. But rather than break the alliance, we would turn it into rhyme. This will not be required.

You have only to learn what the simple principles are upon which these lines are constructed; perhaps they may be reduced to this simple and single one, that every line should in itself be a complete verse, a rule which, in the ordinary heroic cadence, would admit lines of four, six, eight, and ten syllables. That cadence (the iambic, that is to say, the short syllable followed by the long, for example—

What *heart* so *firm*, what *na*ture so se*vère*)

should not be mixed with a different one (the trochaic, which is long and short, nor the galloping ones, with one accent in three syllables) in the same sentence, unless for the sake of producing a peculiar and designed effect. And then they must be blended, as you shade colours into each other in your landscapes. Look at some of my minor poems, and at parts of *Thalaba*, and you will see what experiments I have made in this way. I wish I were with you. I should teach you as boys are taught to compose Latin verses, by making them write mere nonsense, till they learn the tune and the mechanism of the metre.

I write to tell you this, and put you in good humour with yourself and the alliance; otherwise I would have waited in the hope, and almost with the expectation, that to-morrow I might have sent you the inscription upon your noble cousin. After twice beginning, I am now in a fair way of finishing it, and it shall be sent you as soon as it is in a fit state for transcription, though it may probably receive many corrections before it goes abroad.

But I must break off, for I have letters of business to write. So, dear Caroline, farewell for the present. This weather I hope will bring health to you, as it does enjoyment to birds, brutes, and vegetables.—Once more farewell. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

179. To Edith May Southey

Keswick, May 17, 1824.

My dear E. May,—I have found one! I have found one! I did not think there had been such a thing in the world, but I have actually found one. Incredible as it may appear, what I am saying is literally and strictly true. You should have been here to have seen and enjoyed the discovery. I wish you had! and so we all wished—Kate, and Isabel, and your cousin Sara. And we wished for Bertha too, for Bertha would have enjoyed it. She has often heard of it, but how it would have surprised her to have seen it!

You are by this time dying with impatience to know all about it: *what* it was? *where* it was? *when* it was? *how* it was?—and you shall hear all. But we must proceed methodically, lest your pleasure should be spoilt by an abrupt and hurried disclosure. To do this properly, that is to say, with judgement, requires some consideration; and whether to begin with the *What*, or the *Where*, or the *When*, or the *How*, is a matter of critical difficulty, upon which more depends than any person can well understand, who has never composed a book.

It has been a received maxim, since the days of Horace, that an Epic poem should begin in the middle; though I deny the maxim, and have not observed it, believing that the propriety of that rule, like most others, depends very much upon circumstances. How to begin, indeed, is the great difficulty in many cases. In the present, I am inclined to think that postponing the *Quid*-ship, and letting the *Quomodo*-ship follow the *Ubi*-ship (as it naturally would), the matter may best be introduced by letting that good ship the *Quando* lead the way.

When was it, then? *Quando?*

This day, I answer, being Monday, May the 17th, 1824, at ten o'clock in the forenoon. Now for the whereness. *Ubi?* Where was it? A simple answer will not suffice here, for this *Ubi* hath a double relation. And

when, in reply to its first and more general meaning, I tell you it was in the study, the question still remains to be answered in its second and special bearing. I then say it was in the first volume of the *Monumenta Boica*.

My dear daughter, you know that book, and yet you do not know it. I must, therefore, put you in the way of recollecting it; for it is necessary to the full enjoyment of any story that you should understand it perfectly as you go on; and I dare say you have felt this at the opera. You have had the *Monumenta Boica* in your hand, and made use of some of the volume; but I doubt whether you ever looked at the title-page, to see what the work was. You may call it to mind, perhaps, when I tell you where it stands in the library: in the book-case which is between the windows, on the top shelf, fourteen volumes of the foreign small quarto size,—seven standing on one side of the middle division, and seven on the other. You collected a few minor monsters from it for the tea-caddy. It would be an instructive story, were I to tell you how I saw this book at Verbeyst's, on my first visit to Brussels, and did not buy it, and repented that I had not bought it for two years, till I went to Brussels again, and did what can very seldom indeed be done—repaired a fault of omission by buying it. And I might also explain to you what the book is, and wherein its value consists, and why I find it singularly useful, and how many curious things I have found in it, and am finding. But interesting as this would be in itself, it would be improper to introduce it here, because you are becoming impatient to know what it was that I found in this book this morning; and I know how impertinent anything appears in a story which is not essential to its progress or development, when curiosity is all *agog* and a *magog*, as yours is at this time. So we will proceed to the *How* it was, without any delay, let, hindrance, impediment, ambagiosity, circumlocution, or needless, superfluous, and unnecessary roundabout forms of speech; but plainly and briefly replying to the question, *Quomodo?*

As thus: I was showing Cuthbert the pictures in the first volume, upon which I had been employed before breakfast, and there I found it.

And now, in due order, comes the quiddity, the cream, the kernel, the essence or quintessence. *What* was it? *Quid? Quid Diabolus?*

I defy Diabolus himself to guess.

Something it was of which you have heard your aunt Coleridge speak; but which, till this day, I verily thought had not existed either in Heaven above, nor in the earth beneath, nor in the waters which are under the earth.

It was not Moko.

It was not Jilkikker.

It was not Goarum.

It was not a detested Hinder.

But it was,—my dear Edith, guess what it was? I have not defied you to guess, though I have defied Diabolus.

'Here it is!' I exclaimed, and, rising from my chair with delight, carried it to your mother, who was at the other end of the room. 'Here it is,' I cried, 'look at it!' She did look at it; she smiled, and she said, 'There it is, indeed! It really is one! Who would have thought of seeing it!'

'Where is Mrs. Coleridge,' I exclaimed, 'where is Mrs. Coleridge?' and Cuthbert, seeing how I was pleased, clapped his little hands for joy.

I opened the door, went into the passage, and said, 'Mrs. Coleridge? Where is Mrs. Coleridge?'

She was in her own room, and answered hastily, 'Here I am! What do *you* want?'

I had spoken in a loud voice, that it might be heard downstairs, or in the saints'[1] room, if in either place she had happened to be; but certainly not in a tone of alarm. Alarmed, nevertheless, she was; and I, innocent as I was,—yea, in this case more than innocent,—

[1] One of the downstairs parlours at Greta Hall was called 'Paul',—Peter (above) having been robbed to fill the bookshelves. (J. W. Warter's note.)

deserving far other treatment, my whole and sole intent having been to give pleasure,—I, poor I, innocent meritorious, well-meaning I, received a severe reprimand for frightening her, and disturbing her nerves.

But I bore it meekly as Job, and more cheerfully. That I was more cheerful than the man of Uz was natural; for he was in a sorrowful condition. But that I should have been equally meek should be accounted to my honour. And when you teach your children (should you have any) that string of scriptural questions in which it is asked who was the most patient man? I think you ought to put that question in the plural, or rather in the dual form, and teach the little ones to reply, Job and their grandfather Southey.

Let me, if I can, describe the various expressions which passed on this memorable occasion over your aunt's countenance in rapid succession; so rapid, indeed, that one came on before the other had departed, and so they mingled with and modified each other in a manner unutterable by words (I fear) and unconceivable to any but those who are well acquainted with the personage in question.

First, then, it was an expression of dolorous alarm, such as Le Brun ought to have painted: but such as Manning never could have equalled, when, while Mrs. Lloyd was keeping her room in child-bed, he and Charles Lamb sat drinking punch in the room below till three in the morning,—Manning acting Le Brun's passions (punchified at the time), and Charles Lamb (punchified also) roaring aloud and swearing, while the tears ran down his cheeks, that it required more genius than even Shakespeare possessed to personate them so well; Charles Lloyd the while (not punchified) praying and entreating them to go to bed, and not disturb his wife by the uproar they were making.

But when she perceived by my countenance and manner that no misfortune had befallen, and that her alarm was altogether groundless and unwarrantable, alarm was succeeded by a yet more unwarrantable and groundless anger, and then the expression became that

of indignation. Then it was that the eyes lightened and the tongue thundered, and the cataracts of wrath were opened upon my devoted head, and I—if I had not been

Integer vitae scelerisque purus—

how could I have endured the storm? Strong in my innocence, I endured it. Under the protection of conscious virtue, as of an umbrella, I bore the pelting of that pitiless storm. And when the first gleam of better weather appeared in a corner of the countenance, I held forth the book, and said, 'I have found one! Here it is! Look at it!'

The cloud was still hanging on her brow; there was yet a lowering and lurid aspect there, from which another peal of thunder might have proceeded. But impatience was now passing into curiosity (an emotion nearly allied to it), and the corners of the mouth, which had been curved downward, gradually drew up into their proper line. 'What is it? What is it?' she said. 'Let me see!' Perhaps that *let* ought here to be spelt with a double *t*, thus—*lett*, that the emphasis with which it was uttered might be made visible. *Lett* me see! There was an angry as well as a curious impatience in the quick and hurried pronunciation. But,—

Last came joy's ecstatic trial.

When I told her *what* it was, the face brightened into an expression of scornful incredulity, and the corners of the mouth curved up into an incipient smile, which ripened into a short, loud, and honest ha-ha laugh, as I displayed the book, and she saw that it really was what I said was there, what she had so often spoken of, and what she had never expected to see, nor even dreamt of seeing. Blessed be the herald that emblazoned it! Blessed be the Counts of Rot in Bavaria who bore it so many centuries ago! Little did that herald, little did those counts think what delight it would one day occasion at Greta Hall, in the town of Keswick, parish of Crossthwaite, ward of Allerdale, below Derwent, county of Cumberland, kingdom of England, and island

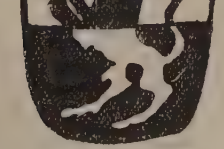
of Great Britain. Little did the humble engraver who engraved the plate, and in his humility did not mark it with his modest name,—(a name which otherwise should be recorded here)—little, I say, did he,—little did the Academy of Sciences at Munich, who published the book, little did they think that on Monday, the 17th day of May, 1824, we should here, in this distant part of the world, discover in it what till then we had always deemed undiscoverable,—a thing existing only in Mrs. Coleridge's creative imagination; and that a young lady at No. 16 York Place, Baker Street, Portman Square, London, would be kept on the rack of impatience while she read through two whole sheets of letter-paper, in no easy handwriting, dying the while with curiosity to know what it was.

It was then,—it was, yes it was

a L———.

But it is a discovery which ought to enter at the eyes as well as the ears, and therefore you shall see as well as read what it was, in the enclosed paper, the seal of which must not be broken, on pain of excommunication (as thereon indited), till the letter has been fairly read to this point.

There you will find a L———.—And so farewell,
From your dutiful father, R. S.



180. To Henry Taylor

Keswick, May 26, 1824.

My dear Sir,—I thank you for your note. Its information is of a kind to make one thoughtful; but the sorrow which I felt was not such as you were disposed to give me credit for.

I am sorry Lord Byron is dead, because some harm will arise from his death, and none was to be apprehended while he was living; for all the mischief which he was capable of doing he had done. Had he lived some years longer, he would either have continued in the same course, pandering to the basest passions and proclaiming the most flagitious principles, or he would have seen his errors and sung his palinodia,—perhaps have passed from the extreme of profligacy to some extreme of superstition. In the one case he would have been smothered in his own evil deeds. In the other he might have made some atonement for his offences.

We shall now hear his praises from all quarters. I dare say he will be held up as a martyr to the cause of liberty, as having sacrificed his life by his exertions in behalf of the Greeks. Upon this score the liberals will beatify him; and even the better part of the public will for some time think it becoming in them to write those evil deeds of his in water, which he himself has written in something more durable than brass. I am sorry for his death, therefore, because it comes in aid of a pernicious reputation which was stinking in the snuff.

With regard to the thought that he has been cut off in his sins, mine is a charitable creed, and the more charitable it is the likelier it is to be true. God is merciful. Where there are the seeds of repentance in the heart, I doubt not but that they quicken in time for the individual, though it be too late for the world to perceive their growth. And if they be not there, length of days can produce no reformation.

In return for your news I have nothing to communicate except what relates to the operations of the desk. I am going to press with the second volume of the *Peninsular War*, after waiting till now in hope of obtaining some Spanish accounts of the war in Catalonia, which it is now pretty well ascertained are not to be found in Spain, though how they should have disappeared is altogether inexplicable, unless the whole account of the books and their author, Francesco di Olivares, given by a certain John Mitford, some four or five years ago, in Colburn's *Magazine*, is fictitious. I am reviewing Hayley's *Memoirs*. Hayley has been worried as schoolboys worry a cat. I am treating him as a man deserves to be treated who was in his time, by popular election, king of the English poets, who was, moreover, a gentleman and a scholar, and a most kind-hearted and generous man, in whose life there is something to blame, more to admire, and most of all to commiserate. My first introduction to Spanish literature I owe to his notes; I owe him, therefore, some gratitude. I have written some verses too, and am going on with the *Tale of Paraguay*, resolutely to its conclusion.

Farewell, my dear Sir; and believe me,—Yours with sincere regard, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

181. To MRS. HUGHES

Keswick, Aug. 12, 1824.

MY DEAR MADAM,—I am indebted to your report of Elmsley's death for the pleasure which I felt, after speaking and thinking, and dreaming of him as dead, in hearing that he was likely to recover; a pleasure worth all the previous pain, and of that kind indeed that I know nothing which can be compared to it. When I was within reach of Elmsley we saw a great deal of each other, and he is one of those friends from whose society I have derived not merely temporary enjoyment, but permanent benefit. The chances of life have separated us for many years, without in any

degree weakening our mutual regard ; and upon hearing of his death I felt that I had lost what in declining years we can ill afford to part with, an object of esteem and affection,—one of the friends of my youth. Certainly I never received so much delight from any letter, as from that which told me he was alive and recovering. He is well enough to have left Oxford for the house of his sister-in-law, near Croydon, where Wynn and Bedford visited him about a fortnight ago, and found him so confident of his own strength as to talk of seeing Keswick this year as a possible thing.

Had I been less occupied, I should have thanked you for a prescription which looks as if it would have been efficacious,—if I could have taken it. But in one respect my constitution is an unlucky one (we talk about constitutions you know, in politics and in medicine, without knowing much about them) ; the smallest quantity of laudanum deranges the action of the liver, and totally suspends the course of the bile, and this of course cannot be done with impunity. Therefore I cannot venture upon any prescription which contains laudanum, though that medicine, and that alone, I believe, would cut short this obstinate catarrhal affliction on its annual appearances. I am tolerably well recovered now, though still with some remains of cough, but it is no longer attended with a feverish pulse ; and as a proof that my strength has pretty well returned, I took a six hours' walk this morning, and crossed Skiddaw, on my return, at about three parts of its elevation.

You will not be displeased to hear that my second volume is making good progress in the press, so that I am once more in the receipt of proof-sheets, which I am lucky enough to regard as one of the pleasures of life. As to a *Book of the State*, there are some weighty objections opposed to a very strong inclination. In the first place, I have many works in hand (you would think me a most rash and audacious man did you know how many), and am this day fifty years old : it is time, therefore, seriously to ask myself what upon the

common calculations of life I could possibly have time to perform; and secondly, were I to undertake such a view of our civil history, the inconvenience of having no great library within reach could only be obviated by an outlay in books, which it would be very inconvenient for me to afford; for it has so happened that no man's gains in this generation have been so little in proportion to his reputation and his labour as mine.

I must not conclude without thanking you for setting Sir Walter's pen in motion. He wrote me a very friendly letter, to which I returned an immediate answer.

All below unite in kind regards. The girls are in expectation of the arrival of a Welsh uncle to-morrow (a boy of fifteen from Westminster), whom they have never seen. He is coming to pass his holiday with me, and is at this time in the mail coach somewhere about Leming Lane. I have seldom seen a boy more after my own heart.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

182. To WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Keswick, Aug. 14, 1824.

MY DEAR LANDOR,—I am so completely removed from what is called literary society (which is at this time about the worst society in the world) that not a breath of opinion concerning your book has reached me, nor have I seen anything which has been written concerning it, except Julius Hare's paper in the *London Magazine*. A more striking book never issued from the press in these kingdoms, nor one more certain of surviving the wreck of its generation, and this not from the adventitious importance of the subject, but from the excellence of the workmanship; for your prose is always, what the most felicitous passages of your poetry are, as excellent in the expression as in the conception.

My own *Colloquies* are now so far advanced, that it will soon become my primary object to complete them. They will contain a connected and extensive

view of our existing state of society, with all its erroneous evils; and I hope the statement will be startling enough to make some of our political men (I will not call them statesmen) rub their eyes. You will feel in the perusal, as I do, that where there is most difference in our views, it is to be explained by the difference of latitude between Tuscany and Cumberland. I should agree more nearly with you in Florence, and at Keswick you would find yourself more in sympathy with me.

By way of relieving the *Dialogues*, I introduce some of them with descriptions of the scenery which lies within the circuit of my usual walks; half a dozen views of it, admirably drawn by William Westall, are now in the engraver's hands. The book will command notice, and provoke hostility. One edition will sell; some of the rising generation will be leavened by it, and in the third and fourth generations its foresight will be proved, and perhaps some of its effects may be seen.

The books you sent me were lucky enough to escape all inquiry. I have been reading *Casaubon's Letters*. If my *Book of the Church* has reached you (as I trust it has, with its companions), you will see that I ought to have read these letters before; you will perceive also that the view which they have led you to take of James's character very much accords with the opinion that I have expressed concerning him.

My family, thank God, is going on well. The two eldest girls are in the South, and greatly do I miss them. My little boy is old enough to have begun upon Latin grammar, and a happier creature does not at this time exist upon this wide earth. It is in our power to make children happy while they are children; and yet how generally is their happiness curtailed, and, as far as nature will permit, destroyed by unwise restrictions and the miserable discipline of our great schools in which boys are bred up to the abuse of power. If Cuthbert lives, and I have to instruct him, he will escape these evils; but how uncertain this must needs be I am fully sensible. Last Thursday I completed the fiftieth year

of my age. My little boy is only in his sixth. I may put him in the way which he should go, and direct him in it when I can accompany him no further, but it is not likely that I should see much of his progress.

Here in England we are in an extraordinary state of quiescence, not a grievance is afloat, and few persons ask themselves what is to become of the rising generation of educated men who can find no room in the three professions, and for whose lives there is no demand, nor what are to be the consequences of an unlimited and illimitable increase of capital, which even the bubble of foreign loans does not appear to check, nor when the manufacturing system is to end, which breeds yahoos as fast as they can be bred, and invents machinery to throw them out of employ. One remarkable fact of general education is beginning to show itself. Above fifty Weekly Miscellanies are published in London at twopence and threepence each, and it is much the smaller portion that deal either in irreligion or in discontent; the rest are useful and amusing, and the sale is prodigious. This is a good symptom among many evil ones.

I have been getting on with my *Tale of Paraguay*, and when I have once escaped from that most difficult of all stanzas, I shall feel like a racer let loose.—God bless you, R. S.

183. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Oct. 4, 1824.

My dear Grosvenor,—Murray states that having conversed with Heber and some other literary friends upon my proposed *History of the Monastic Orders*, 'he now comprehends its probable interest and popularity,' and shall be happy to come to 'closer quarters upon the subject'. He says something of future papers for the *Quarterly Review*, asking me to undertake the *Pepys' Memoirs* and Sir Thomas Browne's Works, and writes requesting a brief sketch of my monastic plan. I have told him little more than that it may be included in six octavo volumes, and comprises matter hardly

less varied and extensive than Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. If he offers me £500 per volume, I will, ere long, make it my chief employment, but he shall not have it for less, and I am in no haste to proceed with the negotiation, being at present sufficiently employed, and to my heart's content.

The '*medical practitioner*' would not have puzzled you if Fortune had permitted us to have been somewhat more together during the last ten years. Yet you have heard from me the name of Doctor Daniel Dove, and something, I think, of the Tristramish, Butlerish plan of his history, which, if the secret be but kept, must, I think, inevitably excite curiosity as well as notice. I have lately taken a pleasant spell at it, and have something more than a volume ready; that is to say, something more than half of what I propose to publish, following it or not with as much more according to its sale and my own inclination. One reason why I wished for you here at this time was to have shown it to you, and to have had your help, for you could have excellently helped me, and I think would have been moved in spirit so to do. If I finish it during the winter, of which there is good hope, I will devise some pretext for going to town, where I must be while it is printed, to avoid the transmission of proofs, by which it would be easy, from calculation of time, to ascertain how far they had travelled, and so of course to discover the author, to whom the printers are to have no clue.

God bless you! R. S.

184. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Oct. 12, 1824.

My dear Grosvenor,—With regard to my labours in English history, the plan which I not long ago communicated to you, of sketching it in a *Book of the State* down to the accession of the reigning family, and following that by the *Age of George the Third*, is all

that I *dream* of accomplishing. The works on which I ought to employ myself, Grosvenor, are those for which I have laid in stores, on which a large portion of my previous studies may be brought to bear, and for which no other person is at present, or is likely to be hereafter, so well qualified. Such a work was the *History of Brazil*, and such will be, if I live to accomplish it, that of the Monastic Orders.

I cannot but smile at your grave admonitions concerning the Doctor, and would give something to have the satisfaction of reading to you the chapters which were written last week. Such a variety of ingredients I think never before entered into any book which had a thread of continuity running through it. I promise you there is as much sense as nonsense there. It is very much like a trifle, where you have whipt cream at the top, sweetmeats below, and a good solid foundation of cake well steeped in ratafia. You will find a liberal expenditure of long-hoarded stores, such as the reading of few men could supply; satire and speculation; truths, some of which might beseem the bench or the pulpit, and others that require the sanction of the cap and bells for their introduction. And withal a narrative interspersed with interludes of every kind; yet still continuous upon a plan of its own, varying from grave to gay; and taking as wild and yet as natural a course as one of our mountain streams.

I am reading Scaliger's *Epistles* at this time, treading in my uncle's steps, who gave me the book when I was in town. Not long ago I finished Isaac Casaubon's. Oh what men were these! and thank God men will never be wanting, like them in one respect at least,—that they will pursue the acquisition of knowledge with as much zeal as others follow the pursuit of wealth, and derive a thousandfold more pleasure in the acquirement.

God bless you! R. S.

185. To Mrs. Hughes

Keswick, Oct. 15, 1824.

My dear Madam,—My employments, thank Heaven, are such that they allow me to be always at leisure, and this is a blessing which would compensate for more untoward circumstances than have fallen to my lot; so great a one, indeed, that, if I had sold my time for any official situation, I verily believe I should have been as uncomfortable as poor Peter Schlemil when he had parted with his shadow. But if I were busier than I am, or ever shall be, it would always give me pleasure to receive a letter from you. I believe we can all of us find time for what we like.

Dr. Hughes's kind present (for which I thank him truly) will probably find a speedy conveyance from your neighbours in the Row. The book will not be the less welcome for Cuthbert's sake, who having some three years ago, when Dr. Bell asked him whether he would choose to be an archbishop or a carpenter, preferred the archbishopric, verily looked upon Canterbury afterwards as his allotted portion in this world, and used to talk with great complacency of what he should do when he came to live at Lambeth, when he was to have more books than his father. He was ill enough to make us very anxious about a fortnight ago, with a bilious fever; but, thank God, he has perfectly recovered from it, and at present we are all well. I have been somewhat seriously an invalid during the summer; the cough however, has fairly departed; and being once more in tolerable condition, I am taking all dutiful pains to keep myself so.

I had neither seen nor heard of the foolish apology for Mrs. [Opie], which is enough to shame her out of Quakerism. Without the aid of Cupid (who, however, has worked many conversions in both sexes) I can account very satisfactorily for her becoming a Quaker. She was bred nominally in Unitarianism, and that, too, of the laxest kind; and it was but nominally, for her

father belonged to that sect only because it was necessary that a man in his profession should seem to be of some religion. She grew up when revolutionary opinions were taking their freest course, and in a city where, I believe, they prevailed more than in any other part of England. Some of her warmest admirers (and no woman had more) were far gone in unbelief; they were men of splendid talents, and, in other respects, of great real worth. In fact, she has always lived among persons whose speculations were under no restraint, and who, however much they differed among themselves, agreed in that rooted dislike to the Establishment, which is a bond of union between the darkest bigots of Popery, the wildest fanatics, and the most thorough infidels. In the state of mind which such circumstances could hardly fail of producing upon a woman who had always been flattered for her talents, but with a lively fancy and a good heart, Mrs. [Opie], from a life of gaiety in London, went, at the age of about forty-five, to nurse her father, whom, in his old age, severe bodily infirmity had awakened to some sense of the *profligacy* of his past life. The only persons in her circle at Norwich who had any warmth of religious feeling were Quakers; and were you to know her 'Quaker Abelard' you would see that few 'Eloisas' were to be trusted with him; but whatever her feelings towards him may be, she wanted something more for her imagination and her heart than the cold form and colder creed of Unitarianism can supply, and Quakerism has a great deal for both: I believe she is sincere, and I like her well enough even to excuse the verses which she has written in Edith's album. Edith will tell you (for she must not write) the ungracious return which they called forth.

The *Peninsular War* is going on well in the press, and I am prosing and versing in as good heart and with as much goodwill as if all the world liked my verse and prose as well as you are pleased to do.

I would fain do the 'State some service'; but I am beginning to act upon the resolution of finishing what

I have begun, and working up the materials—which so large a part of my life has been spent in accumulating—before I open any new foundations. Now that I am half a hundred years old, it is time to wind up my accounts.

Our kindest remembrances to Dr. Hughes, mine also to Mr. H., and, Believe me, dear Madam,—Yours very sincerely, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

186. TO THE REV. NEVILLE WHITE

Keswick, Oct. 28, 1824.

MY DEAR NEVILLE,—This case of the *Remains* is a flagrant instance of what men will do who have no other principle than the principle of trade, when the laws leave, or offer them a loop-hole. The fellows who pirate that work would rob you in the streets, or break open your house, if they dared do it; they have no sense of honour, or of right and wrong, to restrain them.

I would advise that your cheap edition be made better than the pirated ones, though it should sell for six or seven shillings instead of four; the type not being quite so small, nor the page quite so crowded. Johnson published a small edition of Cowper in 1799, in two volumes, which might be a good model; and I do not see why there should be any unwillingness to say at once in the advertisement that the property of the family having been invaded, it is necessary to state that *this* is the only complete edition.

In a court of equity, conducted upon principles of equity, I have no doubt that your cause would have been good; but the Court of Chancery has ceased to be a Court of Equity, and pays as much deference to the quirks and quibbles of law as the most profligate advocate could desire.

The *Life* is yours till it shall have been published twenty-eight years, and as much longer as I may happen to live. In the course of nature, my dear Neville, you are more likely to be called on for friendly counsel in the arrangement of my affairs, after my departure,

than I am to perform the duties of guardian to your son. Provide only against my incapacity for business, and count upon me, as I do upon you, for the full performance of all your wishes, to the best of my ability.

My mind is in no danger, Neville, from tension. It never pursues any one object long enough to be fatigued with it. When I read upon my walks, it is not anything that requires deep attention; it is something that amuses the intellect rather than exerts it, and keeps it, perhaps, in a more quiescent state than it might be if left to its own operations. The book is as a companion with whom I can converse when I like; and as it is always some volume which is never taken up at any other time, there is the wholesome recreation which change produces. Were you in the house with me for a month, you would be convinced that I am anything rather than a hard student.

Have you seen Nicholl's *Arminianism and Calvinism Compared*? It is put together in a most unhappy way, but is the most valuable contribution to our ecclesiastical history that has ever fallen into my hands.

I hope soon to have my *Colloquies* in the press. They will set many persons talking, and some few thinking. They will draw upon me a good load of misrepresentation, calumny, and abuse, which you know how much I regard; and if they do not succeed in pointing out in what manner impending evils may be averted, they will show, at least to future ages, that they were not unforeseen. Our best wishes to all your circle. God bless you, my dear friend.—Yours most affectionately, R. Southey.

187. To George Ticknor

Keswick, Dec. 30, 1824.

My dear Sir,—I have delayed thus long to acknowledge and thank you for your last consignment of books in the hope of telling you, what I am now at last enabled to do, that Gifford has finally given up the *Quarterly Review*, and that, after the forthcoming number, it

will be under John Coleridge's management. This is a matter which I have had very much at heart, that there might be an end of that mischievous language concerning your country. I opposed it always with all my might, and forced in that paper upon Dwight's *Travels*; yet in the very next number the old system was renewed. You may be assured that they have occasioned almost as much disgust here as in America. So far is it from being the language or the wish of the Government, that one of the Cabinet ministers complained of it to me as most mischievous, and most opposite to the course which they were desirous of pursuing. There is an end of it now, and henceforth that journal will do all in its power towards establishing that feeling which ought to exist between the two nations. Let me be peacemaker; and use what influence you have that the right hand of goodwill may be accepted as frankly as it is offered.

I know not what the forthcoming number may contain; but I can answer for the *Review* afterwards. A friend of mine (Hughes, who wrote a pleasant book about the South of France) is preparing a paper upon your literature; and Buckminster's sermons are reprinting at my suggestion.

Now, then, let me thank you for *Philip's War*, so long desired; for G. Fox, digged out of his burrows, and their companions. These Quaker books are very curious; it is out of such rubbish that I have to pick out the whole materials for my intended edifice, and good materials they are when they are found. Before this reaches you I shall have finished the *Tale of Paraguay*, which has hung like a millstone about my neck, owing to the difficulty which the stanza occasioned. As soon as I am rid of it I shall take up the New England poem as a regular employment, and work on with it steadily to the end. A third part is done; I am not making a hero of Philip, as it now seems the fashion to represent him. In my story the question between the settlers and the natives is very fairly represented, without any disposition either to favour the cause of

savage life against civilization, or to dissemble the injuries which trading colonists (as well as military ones) have always committed upon people in an inferior grade of society to themselves. Better characters than the history affords me, or, to speak more accurately, characters more capable of serving the purposes of poetry, I need not desire. The facts are not quite so manageable. I may say, as a friend of mine *heard* Bertrand de Moleville say when, after relating a story, he was told that the facts were not as he had stated them, *Ah, monsieur! tant pis pour les faits.* So I must deal with them in fiction, as a Frenchman deals with facts in history; that is, take as little truth, and mingle it with as much invention as suits my object. To what an extent the French do this I should hardly have thought credible, if I had not daily evidence in their memoirs upon the Peninsular War, comparing them with the undeniable documents in my hands.

My niece desires me to thank you for the sweet story of *Undine*, which is surely the most graceful fiction of modern times. Some other pieces of the same author have been translated here, all bearing marks of the same originality and genius.

I had made a half promise of going to Ireland, to visit one of the best and ablest persons there, the Bishop of Limerick. But it is not likely that the intention can be fulfilled. An Irishman, well informed of the state of things there, writes to me in these words, 'Pray don't think of going to Ireland. I would not insure any man's life for three months in that unhappy country. The populace are ready for a rebellion; and if their leaders should for their own purpose choose to have one, they may have to-morrow a second edition of the Irish massacre.'

Wordsworth was with me lately, in good health, and talked of you. His brother, the Master of Trinity, has just published a volume concerning the Εἰκὼν Βασιλική, a question of no trifling importance both to our political and literary history. As far as minute and accumulative evidence can amount to proof, he has proved it to be

genuine. For myself, I have never, since I read the book, thought that any unprejudiced person could entertain a doubt concerning it. I am the more gratified that this full and satisfactory investigation has been made, because it grew out of a conversation between the two Wordsworths and myself at Rydal, a year or two ago.

Remember me to all my Boston friends; it is a pleasure to think I have so many there. The only American whom I have seen this year is Bishop Hobart of New York. God bless you!—Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

188. To EDITH MAY SOUTHEY

Keswick, Jan. 31, 1825.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—Sorry am I to inform you of the illness of his Serene Highness the Archduke Rumpelstilzchen, Marquis Macbum, Earl Tomlemagne, Baron Raticide, Waouhler, and Skratsch. His Serene Highness is afflicted with the mange. One of the ladies of the Kitchen first perceived that he was not in health; and as none of the king's physicians were within reach, they consulted John Edmondson, who, upon hearing the case, pronounced an unfavourable opinion, saying it was a disorder from which few recovered. Acting, however, upon the maxim which, as you may remember, Grio [1] exhibited in golden letters opposite to his rival's door—*Dum vita spes*, the son of Edmonds prescribed for his Serene Highness that he was to be rubbed with a certain mixture, and take daily a certain quantity of brimstone; and it was thought, after much considera-

[1] Grierson, a druggist of those days in Keswick, who, in a poem of his own composing, called himself Grio. In the midst of a fever panic—

> Grio stepped forth to do the public good,
> And by his efforts saved the sinking brood.
> The son of Edmonds saw with dire despair
> Hundreds recover through the Druggist's care!
>
> (J. W. Warter's note.)

tion, that this brimstone could best be taken in boluses, four at a time, each containing about as much as twelve pills.

The physicians would think his Serene Highness an ugly patient, for he has no faith in physic, and he gives no fees, to say nothing of the risk which there is in feeling his pulse. The ladies of the Kitchen, however, are so interested in his welfare, that they have taken upon themselves the arduous task of administering the medicine; which is a matter of great difficulty and some danger, for his Serene Highness rebels against it strongly. Madam Betty takes him on her lap, and holds his head; Madam Mary holds his legs; and Madam Hannah stands ready with a bolus, which is inserted when he opens his mouth for a mournful mew. That painter who was called the Raffaelle of cats would have found the scene a most worthy subject for his pencil. I, who am historiographer to his Serene Highness, feel but too sensibly that I cannot do justice to it in words. But I rejoice to add that the treatment appears to be attended with success, and that a visible improvement is observed in the patient.

Tell your uncle that Butler in his book charges me with representing, from Bellarmine, an opinion as his which Bellarmine only states in order to confute it; that, not having the original, I took the passage on the authority of South, in one of whose sermons it is quoted, and of Barrow also; that Butler's point-blank assertion staggered me; that I wrote to Mr. Hughes to ascertain the point at Cambridge; that he has transcribed the whole chapter for me, and that now I have only to hope Mr. Butler has written upon the authority of some of his Catholic friends; for I should be sincerely sorry to think he could be guilty of so gross and audacious a misrepresentation. Towards him individually I wish to use all possible urbanity in my reply; but if I do not make minced-meat of his book he shall be welcome to make minced-meat of me.—God bless you. R. S.

189. To Mrs. Southey

Leyden, Thursday, June 30, 1825.

My dear Edith,—My foot is going on as well as possible, and will, according to all appearances, be completely healed in the course of three or four days. Having begun with this statement, *pour votre tranquillité*, as the aubergists at Besançon said at every word, I have next to tell you that I am quartered at Mr. Bilderdijk's, where every imaginable care is taken of me, and every possible kindness shown, and where I have all the comforts which Leyden can afford.

How I came here you are now to learn. Upon applying to Mr. B. to procure a lodging for Henry Taylor and myself, he told me there was a difficulty in doing it, gave a bad account of Leyden lodgings, and proposed that we should both go to his house. Such an offer was not lightly to be accepted. Henry Taylor made inquiries himself, and looked at lodgings which would have contented us; but when he was asked for how long they might be wanted, and said a week or perhaps ten days, the people said that for so short a time he might be lodged at an hotel. The matter ended in my yielding to solicitations which were so earnest that I could not doubt their sincerity, and in his remaining at the hotel. So on Tuesday morning Neville and Arthur Malet departed for the Hague; they may fall in with us at Ghent or they may not, as it may happen. And in the evening I and my lame leg, and my trunk and bag, were deposited at Mr. Bilderdijk's.

You may imagine how curious I was to see the lady of the house, and yet I did not see her when we first met, owing to the shade of the trees and the imperfectness of my sight. She was kind and cordial, speaking English remarkably well, with very little hesitation and without any foreign accent. The first night was not well managed; a supper had been prepared, which came so late, and lasted so long by the slowness which

seems to characterize all operations in this country, that I did not get to bed till one o'clock. My bedroom is on the ground floor, adjoining the sitting-room in which we eat, and which is given up to me. Everything was perfectly comfortable and nice. I asked for my milk at breakfast, and when Mr. Droesa, the surgeon, came in the morning, I had the satisfaction of hearing that he should not dress the wound again in the evening, but leave it four-and-twenty hours, because there was now a disposition to heal. Mr. Bilderdijk brought me some curious manuscripts of the eldest Dutch poets, the morning passed pleasantly. Henry Taylor dined with us at half-past two; dinner lasted, I hardly know how, till six or seven o'clock. I petitioned for such a supper as I am accustomed to at home, got some cold meat accordingly, and was in bed before eleven. I slept well, and the foot is proceeding regularly towards recovery. Mr. Droesa just left me before I began to write. By Sunday I hope to be able to walk about the house, and then my imprisonment will soon be over. I am in no pain, and suffer no other inconvenience than that of keeping the leg always on a chair or settee.

You will now expect to hear something of the establishment into which I have been thus, unluckily shall I say, or luckily, introduced. The house is a good one, in a cheerful street, with a row of trees and a canal in front; large, and with everything good and comfortable about it. The only child, Lodowijk Willem, is at home, Mr. Bilderdijk being as little fond of schools as I am. The boy has a peculiar and to me an interesting countenance. He is evidently of a weak constitution; his dress neat but formal, and his behaviour towards me amusing from his extreme politeness, and the evident pleasure with which he receives any attempt on my part to address him, or any notice that I take of him at table. A young vrouw waits at table. I wish you could see her, for she is a much odder figure than Maria Rosa [1] appeared on her first introduction, only

[1] A Portuguese servant. (Cuthbert Southey's note.)

not so cheerful a one. Her dress is black and white, perfectly neat, and not more graceful than a Beguine's. The cap, which is very little, and has a small front not projecting further than the green shade which I wear sometimes for my eyes, comes down to the roots of the hair, which is all combed back on the forehead; and she is as white and wan in complexion as her cap; slender and not ill-made; and were it not for this utter paleness she would be rather handsome. Another vrouw, who appears more rarely, is not in such plain dress, but quite as odd in her way. Nothing can be more amusing than Mr. Bilderdijk's conversation. Dr. Bell is not more full of life, spirits, and enthusiasm; I am reminded of him every minute, though the English is much more uncouth than Dr. Bell's.[1] He seems delighted to have a guest who can understand, and will listen to him; and is not a little pleased at discerning how many points of resemblance there are between us. For he is as laborious as I have been; has written upon as many subjects; is just as much abused by the Liberals in his country as I am in mine, and does 'contempt' them as heartily and as merrily as I do. I am growing intimate with Mrs. Bilderdijk, about whom her husband, in the overflowing of his spirits, tells me everything. He is very fond of her and very proud of her, as well he may; and on her part she is as proud of him. Her life seems almost a miracle after what she has gone through.

Friday morning.—My foot continues to mend, and proceeds as well as possible towards recovery. I can now, with the help of a stick, walk from room to room. My time passes very pleasantly. A more remarkable or interesting person, indeed, than my host it was never my fortune to meet with; and Mrs. Bilderdijk is not less so. I shall have a great deal to talk about on my return. Early next week I hope to be at liberty; and I may travel the better

[1] Dr. Bell spoke with a strong Scotch accent. (Cuthbert Southey's note.)

because we move here by trekschuits, so that the leg may be kept up. Now do not you vex yourself for an evil which is passed, and which has led to very pleasant consequences. Once more God bless you!

R. S.

190. To Mrs. Southey

Leyden, Thursday, July 7, 1825.

My dear Edith,—This is our manner of life. At eight in the morning Lodowijk knocks at my door. My movements in dressing are as regular as clockwork, and when I enter the adjoining room breakfast is ready on a sofa-table, which is placed for my convenience close to the sofa. There I take my place, seated on one cushion, and with my leg raised on another. The sofa is covered with black plush. The family take coffee, but I have a jug of boiled milk. Two sorts of cheese are on the table, one of which is very strong, and highly flavoured with cummin and cloves; this is called Leyden cheese, and is eaten at breakfast laid in thin slices on bread and butter. The bread is soft, in rolls, which have rather skin than crust; the butter very rich, but so soft that it is brought in a pot to table, like potted meat. Before we begin Mr. B. takes off a little grey cap, and a silent grace is said, not longer than it ought to be; when it is over he generally takes his wife's hand. They sit side by side opposite me; Lodowijk at the end of the table. About ten o'clock Mr. Droesa comes and dresses my foot, which is swathed in one of my silk handkerchiefs. I bind a second round the bottom of the pantaloon, and if the weather be cold I put on a third: so that the leg has not merely a decent, but rather a splendid appearance. After breakfast and tea Mrs. B. washes up the china herself at the table. Part of the morning Mr. B. sits with me. During the rest I read Dutch, or, as at present, retire into my bedroom and write. Henry Taylor calls in the morning, and is always pressed to dine, which he does twice or thrice in the week. We dine at half-past two or three, and the dinners, to my

great pleasure, are altogether Dutch. You know I am a valiant eater, and having retained my appetite as well as my spirits during this confinement, I eat everything which is put before me. Mutton and pork never appear, being considered unfit for any person who has a wound, and pepper for the same reason is but sparingly allowed. Spice enters largely into their cookery; the sauce for fish resembles custard rather than melted butter, and is spiced. Perch, when small (in which state they are considered best), are brought up swimming in a tureen. They look well, and are really very good. With the roast meat (which is in small pieces) dripping is presented in a butter-boat. The variety of vegetables is great. Peas, peas of that kind in which the pod also is eaten, purslain, cauliflowers, *abominations*,[1] kidney beans, carrots, turnips, potatoes. But besides these, many very odd things are eaten with meat. I had stewed apples, exceedingly sweet and highly spiced, with roast fowl yesterday; and another day, having been helped to some stewed quinces, to my utter surprise some ragout of beef was to be eaten with them. I never know when I begin a dish whether it is sugared, or will require salt; yet everything is very good, and the puddings excellent. The dinner lasts very long. Strawberries and cherries always follow. Twice we had cream with the strawberries, very thick, and just in the first stage of sourness. We have had melons also, and currants; the first which have been produced. After coffee they leave me to an hour's nap. Tea follows. Supper at half-past nine, when Mr. B. takes milk, and I a little cold meat with pickles, or the gravy of the meat preserved in a form like jelly; olives are used as pickles, and at half-past ten I go to bed. Mr. B. sits up till three or four, living almost without sleep.

Twice we had a Frisian here, whom we may probably see at Keswick, as he talks of going to England on literary business. Halbertsma is his name, and he is

[1] Broad beans, which he always so denominated. (Cuthbert Southey's note.)

a Mennonite pastor at Deventer. Twice we have had the young Count Hoogmandorp, a fine young man, one of the eight who for six weeks watched day and night by Mr. B. in his illness; and once a Dr. Burgman, a young man of singular appearance and much learning, drank tea here. My host's conversation is amusing beyond anything I ever heard. I cannot hope to describe it so as to make you conceive it. The matter is always so interesting, that it would alone suffice to keep one's attention on the alert; his manner is beyond expression animated, and his language the most extraordinary that can be imagined. Even my French cannot be half so odd. It is English pronounced like Dutch, and with such a mixture of other language, that it is an even chance whether the next word that comes be French, Latin, or Dutch, or one of either tongues shaped into an English form. Sometimes the oddest imaginable expressions occur. When he would say 'I was pleased', he says 'I was very pleasant'; and instead of saying that a poor woman was wounded, with whom he was overturned in a stage-coach in England, he said she was severely *blessed*. Withal, whatever he says is so full of information, vivacity, and character, and there is such a thorough good nature, kindness, and frankness about him, that I never felt myself more interested in any man's company. Every moment he reminds me more and more of Dr. Bell.

I gather by one word which dropped from him that Mrs. B. is his second wife. They are proud of each other, as well they may. She has written a great many poems, some of which are published jointly with some of his, and others by themselves. Many of them are devotional, and many relate to her own feelings under the various trials and sufferings which she has undergone. In some of them I have been reminded sometimes of some of my own verses, in others of Miss Bowles's. One would think it almost impossible that a person so meek, so quiet, so retiring, so altogether without display, should be a successful authoress, or hold the first place in her country as a poetess. The profits of

literature here are miserably small. In that respect I am in relation to them what Sir Walter Scott is in relation to me. Lodowijk (thus the name is spelt) is a nice good boy, the only survivor of seven children. He is full of sensibility, and I look at him with some apprehension, for he is not strong, and I fear this climate, which suits his father better than any other, is injurious to him. Tell Cuthbert that the oyevaar has paid him another visit, and that Lodowijk's other playmate is a magnificent tabby cat, as old as himself, who, however, is known by no other name than puss, which is good Dutch as well as English.

English books are so scarce here, that they have never seen any work of mine except *Roderick*. Of course I have ordered over a complete set of my poems and the *History of Brazil*, and as E. May is in London I have desired her to add, as a present from herself to Mrs. B., a copy of Kirke White's *Remains*. I can never sufficiently show my sense of the kindness which I am experiencing here. Think what a difference it is to be confined in an hotel, with all the discomforts, or to be in such a family as this, who show by every word and every action that they are truly pleased in having me under their roof.

I manage worst about my bed. I know not how many pillows there are, but there is one little one which I used for my head till I found that it was intended for the small of my back. Everything else I can find instruction for, but here is nobody to teach one how to get into a Dutch bed, or how to lie in one. A little bottle of brandy is placed on the dressing-table, to be used in cleansing the teeth. Saffron is used in some of the soups and sauces. The first dish yesterday was marrow in a tureen, which was eaten upon toast. I eat everything, but live in daily fear of something like suety pudding or tripe. About an hour before dinner a handsome mahogany case containing spirits is produced ; a glass waiter is taken out of it, and little tumblers with gilt edges, and we have then a glass of liqueur with a slice of cake. Deventer cake it is called ;

and an odd history belongs to it. The composition is usually intrusted only to the burgomaster of that city, and when the baker has made all the other ingredients ready the chief magistrate is called upon, as part of his duty, to add that portion of the materials which constitute the excellence and peculiarity of the Deventer cake. I shall have much to tell you, for I know not where I have heard so much to amuse, so much to affect, so much to interest and inform me as since I have been a prisoner here.

Love to the children. God bless you, my dear Edith !—Your affectionate Husband, R. S.

191. To John May

Utrecht, July 17, 1825.

My dear Friend,—You bespoke a letter from Franeker, and as I could not go to Franeker to write it, your expectation of receiving one was in some danger of being disappointed. If you knew the might of the thermometer in Utrecht at this time (seven in the evening), and if there were any hygrometer which could ascertain the degree of exudation now going on from every pore of my not-at-this-time ' too solid flesh ', you would consider it an act of heroic virtue in me to have walked from one chair to another for the purpose of taking a penknife from my coat-pocket, mended a pen at the window, and then mustered courage to begin an epistle.

You will have heard of my mishap from Harley Street. The consequences might have been very serious. Such as they were, they crippled me for three whole weeks ; and from June 25 to July 16 I was under the surgeon's care. The wound is nearly healed, but the limb is weakened, and every night the foot is swollen, as it used to be after two nights' mail-coach travelling. It will require care when I reach home, and, I fear, may disable me from taking sufficient exercise to keep my general system in the condition which it has regained even during this confinement, and in

spite of it; for in all other respects I feel like a sound man.

That confinement I cannot but regard as singularly fortunate, unpleasant as the cause was. It threw me upon the charity of Bilderdijk and his wife, two of the best and most interesting people with whom it has ever been my fortune to become acquainted. And no part of my life ever passed away more rapidly, more profitably, or more pleasantly, than while I was confined to the sofa under this roof. I parted with them on Friday with great regret, though not without a hope of seeing them at Keswick, and a determination of revisiting them at Leyden, should life and circumstances render it possible. Thursday I proceeded to Haarlem and Amsterdam with Henry Taylor, who stuck by the wreck when our party was broken up. We stayed one day in the stinking city of Amsterdam (the noisiest as well as the most stinking of all cities at this time), and came this morning in the trekschuit to Utrecht, a passage of eight hours. Our places are taken in the diligence for Antwerp to-morrow, and by Saturday next we hope to be in London.

I shall bring home a journal which is all the better for my tarriance at Leyden, though, peradventure, it may be the worse for my laying it aside in order to hurry through this letter. I have sent home seventy-five goodly folios (Heaven send them a safe delivery at Keswick) and about as many more volumes of smaller calibre. It does me good to think of them, to anticipate the joy I shall have in receiving and arranging, and the pleasure and profit in using them. Among them are some of those which I most wanted:—the first edition of Wadding, containing his whole works, but not the supplements; Mabillon's *Annales*, but not his *Acta*; two of Durand and Martene's Collections; the Latin Glossary of Ducange; and some other excellent books. I have seen some curious persons, and heard many curious things; I have eaten of all Dutch dishes that were set before me, in unimaginable compounds and conjunctions; I have drunk of all strong liquors

that were set before me, and all weak ones; I have regaled upon cakes, the receipt for making which is a state secret, entrusted only to the Burgomaster of Deventer; I have been called Mynheer, and also Master Soudey; and, finally, I have been disturbed after I had gone to bed, and as nearly to sleep as the ever-to-be-execrated watchmen and dogs of Amsterdam would permit, to receive a letter of reproof from the missionary of the London Society for Converting the Jews, for my intention of travelling by the trekschuit to Utrecht this morning, instead of tarrying a day to hear him preach an extempore sermon. Since my midnight arrest with Senhor Aqua Casa at Lagos, this is the most comical adventure that has befallen me.

Heaven send us cooler weather to-morrow, and thin Dutchmen in the diligence! I shall take the latter on to Antwerp; and if I should find no scraps of time there for adding to it, thus much will suffice for letting you know that I am in good health and in good spirits, but desperately hot at this present writing. God bless you. —Yours affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

192. To HENRY TAYLOR

Keswick, Oct. 22, 1825.

MY DEAR H. T.,—Canning came here from Lowther, and sat about half an hour with me. My acquaintance with him is of some five years' standing, and of course slight, as it is very rarely that circumstances bring me in his way. Had we been thrown together in early life,—that is, if I had been three years older, and had been sent to Eton instead of Westminster,—we might probably have become friends. 'Very ordinary intelligence' has never sufficed for me in the choice of my associates, unless there was extraordinary kindness of disposition, or strength of moral character to compensate for what was wanting. When these are found, I can do very well without great talents; but without them the greatest talents have no attractions for me. If Canning were my neighbour, we might easily become

familiar, for we should find topics enough of common interest, and familiarity grows naturally out of an easy intercourse where that is the case. But I am very sure that his good opinion of me would not be increased by anything that he would see of me in general society.

With regard to my writings, I am well aware that some of them are addressed to a comparatively small part of the public, out of which they will not be read. Probably not half a dozen even of those persons who are most attached to me, ever read all that I have published. But if immediate reputation were my object, I know not how it could more surely be attained than by writing to such different classes as those among whom my different books find readers for the sake of the subject matter. The truth, however, is, that this never enters into my consideration. I take up a subject because it interests me. I treat it in the manner which seemeth best in my own eyes, and when it has been sent forth to take its chance, the only care which I have concerning it is to correct and improve it in case it should be reprinted.

The Bishop of Chester has been here, and Mackintosh breakfasted with me and spent an evening also. He has been in Holland, but knows Bilderdijk only by name and by reputation.

My books arrived about a month ago, and I have been in a high state of enjoyment ever since. But I have had another pleasure since their arrival, which is to learn that the second edition of Wadding's *Annales Minorum*, for want of which I was fain to purchase the first of Verbeyst, has been bought for me at Rome by Senhouse, this being seventeen volumes, the first only eight. To me who desire always the fullest materials for whatever I undertake, this is a great acquisition. My after-supper book at present is *Erasmus's Letters*, from which I know not whether I derive most pleasure or profit.

The tendency of my ecclesiastical writings, whether controversial or historical, is not to disturb established delusions, but to defend established truths. It is not

to any difference of religion that the better character of the lower orders in France must be ascribed—the persons who are under forty years of age and above twenty having grown up without any—but to the difference of national manners, amusements, &c., the way in which our manufactures are carried on, and the effect which, within the last thirty years, the poor-laws have produced. So far, however, as religion comes into the account, it is in favour of the French for these reasons, that the lowest class have a religion there, which here very generally they have not (I speak of large towns and manufacturing districts where the neglected population have outgrown the churches); that a bad religion is better than none; and that the effects of the Roman Catholic system (as of Methodism) become more and more injurious as you trace them up from the lowest to the higher ranks. This I shall this minute note as a subject to be pursued in my *Colloquies*.

God bless you! R. S.

193. To Mrs. Hughes

Keswick, Dec. 6, 1825.

My dear Madam,—The *generals* which you have heard of us have been of the most general *genus*; these exceptions being to be made from the statement of our being all well,—that I am still lame of one foot, and that my son, my three younger daughters, and Sara Coleridge, are settled in the whooping-cough for the winter. Bating these things, with Bertha's toothache, and Isabel's cold, and Edith's sore throat, and a few other, &c.—why, thank God, we are as well as can be expected. And as the force of the whooping-cough has spent itself, and of the toothache also, and the sore throat is better, and Isabel has been this day be-calomelled (which is her sovereign remedy when her head and tongue indicate a week of it), and I can bear a close shoe again,—why, methinks, all is well, if not in the present tense, at least in the future in *rus*.

My journey into Holland proved effectual, as I hoped

it would, in getting rid of my old enemy for the season. But—oh, that *but!*—my misfortunes in Holland, though they did not, like Tristram Shandy's, begin before I was born, began before I left England,—yes, before I left home. I have them at this moment, not at my finger's, but at my foot's end; and as you desire the whole Iliad, why the whole Iliad you shall hear. *Ill*iad on this occasion it ought to be written, for an ill story it is.

Be it known, then, to you, that two days before my departure from Keswick, at the end of May last, in coming down Latrigg with the children, I suffered a slight hurt from a disagreement between the shoe and one of the joints at the end of my right foot. Though one of the most peaceable persons in the world, and careful ones, too, in such things, I cannot always succeed in keeping the peace there; but a piece of paper laid on in place of the old skin had always, heretofore, sufficed till a new one was formed. Towards the close of my journey to London the foot swelled with travelling, and the pressure at that part made it fester, when it would otherwise have healed. A little rest in London put all to rights, as it appeared. Over the water I went, and proceeded to Douay, making that place in my route for the dutiful purpose of seeing where my twice or thrice great-grandfather, Sir Herbert Croft, is buried,—the first of the name, who turned Roman Catholic, and died among the English Benedictines. I had a mind to see his monument, but I might as well have looked for Amandus and Amanda's at Lyons; for when I got there, the church had been gutted during the Revolution, and the crypt was full of rubbish, and inaccessible. So I could do no more for proving myself the most dutiful of twice or thrice great-grandsons, than look at the outside of the ugly building and the crypt-door.

Now, whether it were at Douay or at Bouchain, I know not, but at one or other place, Satan, who took the form of a flea in former times to annoy Saint Dominic, took the worse form of a bug to annoy me.

Whether it were so, or that by some instinct in a Roman Catholic bug it knew me for a heretic of the first class, so it was, that the said bug fixed upon that very joint for his supper, which ill-fortune had, I suppose, rendered tender and so to her liking. And to make short of a long story, the excessive heat of the weather, and the excitement of travelling, brought an inflammation there; and I reached Leyden in such a state that the consequences might have been very serious if the evil had gone on four-and-twenty hours longer. Then I lay three weeks under a surgeon's hands. When I got back to London, just as the wound was healing erysipelas appeared there; and though this was soon subdued, a tendency to swell upon the slightest occasion still continues, and the joint will always be stiff.

Now I should tell you that Bilderdijk and his wife (who translated *Roderick* into Dutch) took me into their house at Leyden, and nursed me there; and that they are two such people, that I never passed three weeks of my life more to my heart's content. But it would take a longer letter than this to contain all that I could say of these most excellent and most remarkable persons. I would gladly purchase two such friends again at the same price, if it were possible that two such could be found.

I sent home nine hundred-weight of goodly folios, and here I am revelling upon them. Mr. Butler will have the benefit in due time. A volume of *Vindiciae* will very soon be finished, and published at the opening of the session, without waiting for a second. It will be an odd book, with much variety of matter, and, if I complete the design, will contain a more regular exposure of Roman Catholic villany than has ever yet appeared. The *Peninsular War* will be published in the spring; *Oliver Newman* takes long naps.

I have not seen the *Life of Sheridan*, and now that the *Quarterly* has changed its editor, I shall know nothing more concerning it than what I may do in it myself. I have had some correspondence with Sir Walter concerning the changes.

Pray give me your receipt for erysipelas, an enemy I have learnt to fear. My womankind join in kind regards; make mine to Dr. Hughes and your son, and believe me, my dear Madam,—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

194. To HENRY TAYLOR

Keswick, Dec. 31, 1825.

MY DEAR H. T.,—I have pursued so little method in my own studies at any time of my life that I am in truth very little qualified to direct others. Having been from youth, and even childhood, an omnivorous reader, I found myself when I commenced man with a larger stock of general information than young men usually possess, and the desultory reading in which I have always indulged (making it indeed my whole and sole recreation), has proved of the greatest use when I have been pursuing a particular subject through all its ramifications.

With regard to metaphysics I know nothing, and therefore can say nothing. Coleridge I am sure knows all that can be known concerning them; and if your friend can get at the kernel of his *Friend* and his *Aids to Reflection*, he may crack peach-stones without any fear of breaking his teeth. For logic—that may be considered indispensable, but how far that natural logic which belongs to good sense is assisted or impeded by the technicalities of the schools, others are better able to determine than I am, for I learnt very little, and nothing which I ever learnt stuck by me unless I liked it.

The rules for composition appear to me very simple; inasmuch as any style is peculiar, the peculiarity is a fault, and the proof of this is the easiness with which it is imitated, or, in other words, caught. You forgive it in the original for its originality, and because originality is usually connected with power. Sallust and Tacitus are examples among the Latins, Sir T. Browne, Gibbon, and Johnson among our own authors; but look at the imitations of Gibbon and Johnson! My

advice to a young writer is, that he should weigh well what he says, and not be anxious concerning *how* he says it: that his first object should be to express his meaning as perspicuously, his second as briefly as he can, and in this everything is included.

One of our exercises at Westminster was to abridge the book which we were reading. I believe that this was singularly useful to me. The difficulties in narration are to select and to arrange. The first must depend upon your judgement. For the second, my way is, when the matter does not dispose itself to my liking, and I cannot readily see how to connect one part with another naturally, or make an easy transition, to lay it aside. What I should bungle at now may be hit off to-morrow; so when I come to a stop in one work I lay it down and take up another.

For a statesman the first thing requisite is to be well read in history. Our politicians are continually striking upon rocks and shallows, which are all laid down in the chart. As this is the most important and most interesting branch of knowledge, so also is it one to which there is no end. The more you read the more you desire to read, and the more you find there is to be read. And yet I would say this to encourage the student, not to dismay him, for there is no pleasure like this perpetual acquisition and perpetual pursuit. For an Englishman there is no single historical work with which it can be so necessary for him to be well and thoroughly acquainted as with Clarendon. I feel at this time perfectly assured that if that book had been put into my hands in youth it would have preserved me from all the political errors which I have outgrown. It may be taken for granted that —— knows this book well. The more he reads concerning the history of those times the more highly he will appreciate the wisdom and the integrity of Clarendon. For general histories of England, Hume's is not ranked higher than it deserves for its manner, and the perpetual presence of a clear intellect. Henry may be classed with Rapin as laborious and heavy. I have never had

an opportunity of reading Carte, in whom I believe there is much good matter. For matter and research Turner's is very much the best, as far as it goes. But were your friend, as an exercise in composition, to undertake the history of a single reign, it would surprise him to find into how wide a field of reading he would be led, and how much he would discover that has been overlooked.

The advice I would give any one who is disposed really to read for the sake of knowledge, is, that he should have two or three books in course of reading at the same time. He will read a great deal more in that time and with much greater profit. All travels are worth reading, as subsidiary to reading, and in fact essential parts of it: old or new, it matters not —something is to be learnt from all. And the custom of making brief notes of reference to everything of interest or importance would be exceeding useful.

Enough of this. Do you know who wrote that paper in *Blackwood* which you sent me? for I should like to know. Whoever the author be, I very much agree with him. But when you say that conciliation and comprehension should be the policy of the Church, I agree only as to the latter. Comprehension is the principle upon which the Articles were framed, but for conciliating enemies, Heaven bless those who attempt it! There are two things which may endanger the Church. The Catholic Question is one, scandalous promotions are the other. Its safety just now consists in public opinion acting upon the Government in both cases, and in some degree controlling it. The bigotry which is in the Church is hurtful enough, but not so hurtful as the promotion of unworthy men who take the bigoted party just as they would take the strongest side in case of danger.

A humorous French criticism upon the *Tale of Paraguay* has found its way into the *Westmoreland Gazette*, that I have shown off my professional knowledge too much in dwelling upon vaccination and the cow-pox. This I get by my doctorship.

God bless you! R. S.

195. To Caroline Bowles

1 *Harley Street, July* 2, 1826.

Dear Caroline,—You will be glad to know that I am returned safely after a pleasant visit to my Leyden friends, and a pleasant journey; that my expected attack, though not prevented, has been fairly kept down and subdued; that I am in good health and spirits; and finally, that on Wednesday night next I set out for Cumberland, hoping to reach home on Friday morning.

Now for the next point which will interest you—my return for Parliament for the borough of Downton. Lord Radnor has done this without my consent or knowledge, solely on account of the *Book of the Church*. I never saw him, nor had any communication with him. The return is void, because I hold a pension of £200 a year during pleasure. If this were not the case, I would not take the oath respecting the qualification. And if I were actually qualified, and no other impediment existed, my inclinations, habits, and plain straightforward sense would determine me to reject the seat without hesitation. Therefore I will not frank a letter. You, however, may direct to me as M.P. till Parliament meets, till which time the post office will duly honour those two letters. The affair is singular and amusing; and as it gratifies my friends, it gratifies me, now that I have done laughing at it.

I bought books enough to fill a huge chest, the arrival of which at Keswick will make me happy for a week, and the unpacking of which will be a great joy to all the juniors of the family. And as many volumes are full of prints representing the churches, chateaus, &c., in the Low Countries, even the elders will be reconciled to this importation, though I begin to have some qualms respecting the danger of carrying any greater weight upstairs in a house which was certainly not built with reference to such a library.

You will smile at hearing that I have found a Sister

Providence, whom I must take the liberty of introducing to Mr. Butler in the *Quarterly Review*.

I dine to-day at the Bishop of London's, who is very kind to me at all times, and who urges me to go on with my *Vindiciae*. To-morrow I pass at Streatham with my uncle, and under the apprehension that I shall hardly see him again—a feeling which I painfully experienced at parting from Bilderdijk. Life is so full of partings, that when one thinks of it there is a temptation to wish one's self at the journey's end.

But I am going home, to be at rest I trust, and get my after-dinner sleep and to be cool—and to be clean—and to write prose and also to write verse, and go on the lake and into the lake, and play with the cats, and talk nonsense with the children, and learn Dutch with Cuthbert, and receive proof-sheets, and rub through life as smoothly and pleasantly as I can. If I could have you within sight I would not ask Fortune for much more.—God bless you, dear friend.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

196. To JOHN KENYON

Keswick, July 12, 1826.

MY DEAR KENYON,—I did not receive your letter with Dennis's comical and crazy book till the last week in May, when Longman sent them with other long-retarded communications to Harley Street. Thank you for the letter, and thank you for the book (which comes seasonably, Mr. Butler having, with his usual indiscretion, appealed to it as a set-off against the *Revelations of Sister Nativité*), and thank you on Mrs. Southey's part for the promised consignment from your West Indian estate. I hear with great satisfaction the intentions which are entertained of adding, in consequence, to our stock of home-brewed wines. When your packet reached me I was on the way to Holland, and the journey has perfectly answered the remedial object for which it was undertaken. At Brussels I heard of my election for Downton, and found, on my return to

Harley Street, an unsigned letter to this effect, that the writer, being pleased with the *Book of the Church*, and with its concluding summary, had been anxious that the author of that book should have a seat in the ensuing Parliament, and, having a little interest, had so managed that he is at this moment in possession of that seat, under the single injunction '*ut sustineat firmiter strenue et continuo quae ipse bene docuit esse sustinenda*'. My reply was addressed to Lord Radnor's confidential agent, Mr. White of Essex Street, a friend of poor Tobin's, and who thereby happened to be an old acquaintance of mine. It stated that a seat in Parliament was neither consistent with my circumstances, inclinations, habits, or pursuits in life; that the return was null because I hold a pension of £200 during pleasure; that if that obstacle was removed there would be the want of a qualification, the oath being one which I would not take upon such grounds as were sometimes supplied for such occasions, and therefore that when Parliament met a new Writ must be moved for. I concluded with expressing a proper sense of the honour which Lord Radnor had thus singularly conferred upon me. In his reply he says, 'That the feeling expressed in this letter was just what he could have wished for a representative to feel, and therefore increases his regret at the disappointment of his intentions;' and there the matter ends. M.P. I shall be as to the useful privilege of receiving letters till Parliament meets, because the post office (as in the case of a double return) acts upon the official return; but I do not frank, because I know that the election is in itself null. The obstacle might have been removed without the slightest difficulty, if I had chosen to sit; it would only have been to have had the pension transferred to my wife, which might have been done for asking, and then to have been re-elected. But for me to change my scheme of life and go into Parliament, would be to commit a moral and intellectual suicide. When I returned home on Friday last, the Keswick band was drawn up in honour of my M.P.-ship when

I alighted from the mail-coach, and the whole posse of the place had assembled to see what alteration dignity had produced in my stature and appearance. They think my election and the General's 'a credit to the town', and on Friday next the General is in like manner to have his triumphal reception. My amusement at being the object of a day's mob-popularity was sadly marred by finding Isabel very ill with a dreadful sore throat and bilious derangement; she is still in a precarious state, recovering so slowly that I sometimes fear it would be more accurate to say she is not worse, than that she is better. Were it not for this uneasiness my spirits would be at their usual pitch, or, perhaps, a little above it, for the joy of being once more at home, the satisfaction of a regular life, and the pleasure of pursuing my favourite occupations, and the expectation of a noble chest full of books, which I purchased at Brussels. I wish I could add to these the hope of seeing you at Keswick in the course of the summer or autumn. God bless you.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

197. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Sunday night, July 16, 1826.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—I have lost my sweet Isabel. There was hope of her recovery till yesterday evening, when my misgivings were dreadfully confirmed by symptoms which I knew too well. This evening she departed in a swoon, without a struggle, as if falling asleep.

Under this heavy affliction we have the support of religion,—the sure and only source of comfort. I am perfectly tranquil and master of myself, suffering most for what my wife suffers, who yet exerts herself with Christian fortitude. But the body cannot be controlled like the mind, and I fear I shall long feel the effects of an anxiety which has shaken every fibre. Were it not for the sake of my family, how gladly would I also depart, and be at rest.

God bless you, my dear Grosvenor! R. S.

198. To Edith May, Bertha, and Katharine Southey

July 19, 1826.

My dear Daughters,—I write rather than speak to you on this occasion, because I can better bear to do it, and because what is written will remain, and may serve hereafter for consolation and admonishment, of which the happiest and best of us stand but too often in need.

If anything could at this time increase my sorrow for the death of one who was the pride of my eyes and the joy of my heart, it would be that there are so many who have their full share in it. When your dear mother and I were last visited with a like affliction, you were too young to comprehend its nature. You feel and understand it now; but you are also capable of profiting by it; and laying to your hearts the parental exhortations which I address to you, while they are wounded and open.

This is but the first trial of many such which are in store for you. Who may be summoned next is known only to the All-wise Disposer of all things. Some of you must have to mourn for others; some one for all the rest. It may be the will of God that I should follow more of my children to the grave; or in the ordinary course of nature and happiest issue, they may see their parents depart. Did we consider these things wisely, we should perceive how little it imports who may go first, who last; of how little consequence sooner or later is, in what must be. We must all depart when our time comes,—all to be re-united in a better state of existence, where we shall part no more.

Our business here is to fit ourselves for that state,—not by depreciating or renouncing those pleasures which may innocently and properly be enjoyed, but by correcting the faults to which we are prone, cultivating our better dispositions, doing the will of God by doing all we can for the good of others, and fixing our dearest hopes on Heaven, which is our resting-place, and our everlasting home.

My children, you have all brought into the world good dispositions: I bless God for it, more than for all the other blessings which he has vouchsafed me. But the best dispositions require self-watchfulness, as there is no garden but what produces weeds. Blessed be God, I have never seen in either of you any one symptom of an evil nature. Against great sins there is no occasion to warn you; but it is by guarding against little ones that we acquire a holy habit of mind, which is the sure foundation of happiness here and hereafter.

You know how I loved your dear sister, my sweet Isabel, who is now gathered to that part of my family and household (a large one now!) which is in Heaven. I can truly say that my desire has ever been to make your childhood happy, as I would fain make your youth, and pray that God would make the remainder of your days. And for the dear child who is departed, God knows that I never heard her name mentioned, nor spoke, nor thought of her, without affection and delight. Yet this day, when I am about to see her mortal remains committed earth to earth, it is a grief for me to think that I should ever, by a harsh or hasty word, have given her even a momentary sorrow which might have been spared.

Check in yourselves then, I beseech you, the first impulses of impatience, peevishness, ill-humour, anger, and resentment. I do not charge you with being prone to these sins,—far from it,—but there is proneness enough to them in human nature. They are easily subdued in their beginnings; if they are yielded to they gather strength and virulence, and lead to certain unhappiness in all the relations of life. A meek, submissive, obliging disposition is worth all other qualities. I beseech you, therefore, to bear and forbear, carefully to guard against giving offence, and more carefully (for this is the more needful admonition) to guard against taking it. A soft answer turneth away wrath. There is no shield against wrongs so effectual as an unresisting temper. You will soon find the reward of any conquest which you shall thus obtain over your-

selves: the satisfaction is immediate; and the habit of equanimity which is thus easily acquired will heighten all your enjoyments here, as well as enable you the better to support those afflictions which are inseparable from humanity.

Your sister is departed in her innocence: 'of such is the kingdom of Heaven.' For you, if your lives are prolonged, there will be duties and trials in store, for which you must prepare by self-government, and for which God will prepare you if you steadfastly trust in his promises, and pray for that grace which is never withheld from humble and assiduous prayer.

My children, God alone knows how long I may be spared to you. I am more solicitous to provide for your peace of mind, and for your everlasting interest, than for your worldly fortunes. As I have acted for myself in that respect, so do I feel for you. The longer I may live, the more in all likelihood will be the provision which may be made for you; large it can never be, though whenever the hour comes there will be enough, with prudence and good conduct, for respectability and comfort. But were it less, my heart would be at rest concerning you while I felt and believed that you were imbued with those principles, and had carefully cultivated in yourselves those dispositions which will make you heritors of eternal life.

I copy this letter for each of you with my own hand. It will be read with grief now. But there will come a time when you may think of it with a solemn rather than melancholy pleasure, and feel grateful for this proof of love. Take it, then, with the blessing of—
Your afflicted and affectionate Father,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

199. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

July 19, 1826.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—Τετέλεσται. I have seen the mortal remains of my sweet Isabel committed earth to earth. And what I must now do is, to find occupation

in the business of this world, and comfort in the thought of the next. The loss which I suffered ten years ago was greater; the privation, perhaps, not so great; and there were not so many to partake and augment the sorrow.

It would be acting a friend's part, Grosvenor, if you would come to me a few weeks hence. My mind will soon regain its wonted composure, and keep to itself all thoughts which would awaken the grief of others. But I should be truly glad to have you here, and the house would be the better for the presence of an old friend. My poor wife would recover the sooner if some such turn were given to her thoughts, and we might enjoy each other's company; for I should enjoy it at leisure, which it is impossible that we should ever do in London. Indeed, I know not when I shall have heart enough to leave home again for a long absence.

I wish to show you some things, and to talk with you about others; one business in particular, which is the disposal of my papers whenever I shall be gathered to my fathers and to my children. That good office would naturally be yours, should you be the survivor, if the business of the Exchequer did not press upon you, like the world upon poor Atlas's shoulders. I know not now upon whom to turn my eyes for it, unless it be Henry Taylor. Two long journies with me have made him well acquainted with my temper and every-day state of mind. He has shown himself very much attached to me, and would neither want will nor ability for what will not be a difficult task, inasmuch as that which is of most importance, and would require most care, will (if my life be spared but for a year or two) be executed by my own hand. You do not know, I believe, that I have made some progress in writing my own life and recollections upon a large scale. This will be of such certain value as a post obit, that I shall make it a part of my regular business (being, indeed, a main duty) to complete it. What is written is one of the things which I am desirous of showing you.

If you ever look over my letters, I wish you would mark such passages as might not be improper for publication at the time which I am looking forward to. You, and you alone, have a regular series which has never been intermitted. From occasional correspondents plenty of others, which, being less confidential, are less careless, will turn up. I will leave a list of those persons from whom such letters may be obtained, as may probably be of avail.

I am not weary of the world, nor is the world weary of me; but it is fitting that I should prepare, in temporal matters, for the separation which must take place between us, in the course of years, at no very distant time, and which may occur at any hour.

Our love to Miss Page. She will feel for us the more, because she knows what we have lost.

God bless you, my dear Grosvenor! R. S.

200. To Mrs. Hughes

Keswick, Aug. 11, 1826.

My dear Madam,—Your letter is very kind, and I must answer it myself, however painful the effort. We are sorely shaken, and are as yet hardly recovered from the outward and visible effects. I do my best to bring the young ones into their ordinary course of feeling, and am best able to do it, because the loss is not so perpetually present to me as it must needs be to them. They, however, will soon, in the happy course of nature, outlive their sense of it.

This day five weeks I returned to Keswick, and found my sweet Isabel miserably ill with sore throat and sickness; the sickness had ceased, and there had that day (the sixth of her illness) been a manifest amendment of the throat. Her recovery was confidently promised and expected. But the sickness returned, and rendered it impossible either for the throat to heal or for nature to be supported, and on the tenth day after my return God granted her a merciful release, at the moment when I was on my knees

praying for it. At that moment my heart was stronger than it is now. I have, however, recovered the power of sleeping, which for some time I had lost. My poor wife still dreads the approach of night, and feels at this time the effect of her unremitting exertions during the whole trial. Its effect has been as if a sudden weight of years had been laid upon her, and something of the same kind I feel in myself. Were it not for those who are left, how earnestly I should desire to depart and be at rest, for these trials are worse than death; and the apprehension of still having them to endure, under which we may be said almost continually to have lived for many years, acquires a miserable strength upon every fresh proof of the instability of human happiness and human life. It is, however, well for us that we both have duties to perform, and an habitual faith to support us.

At present Time appears to be passing slowly and heavily; it is a comfort to know that he holds his course surely the while. To-morrow, if it finds me alive, will complete my fifty-second year; but in constitution, in feeling, and in the relations of society I am a much older man. I have been married more than thirty years, and have been a longer time upon the stage of public life. I have borne the buffetings of the world, and stood like a common butt for obloquy and slander. Nothing that has assailed my character, or affected my worldly fortune, ever gave me an hour's vexation, or deprived me of an hour's rest. My happiness has been in my family, and there only was I vulnerable; that family is now divided between earth and heaven; and I must pray to remain with those who are left, so long as I can contribute to their welfare and comfort, rather than to be gathered (as otherwise I would fain be) to those who are gone. Those only who know what I have lost, can tell what I have lost in them. But that all things are ordered for the best, I believe feelingly.

God bless you, my kind-hearted and good friend.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

201. To the Rev. Neville White

Keswick, Oct. 15, 1826.

My dear Neville,—While I was at Lowther the week before last, there came a letter here from the bishop, saying that he had till then been in correspondence with some other person concerning the living; that negotiation was at end, and he wished to know of me whether James was connected with the so-called Evangelical Party, and the British and Foreign Bible Society. I replied that he belonged to no party, but was a zealous Churchman, desirous of doing his duty; that I did not know whether he had anything to do with the Bible Society; but this I did know, that he performed the Church service in a manner which commands attention, and that he would be a most useful minister in a populous parish. My letter was written on the seventh. I referred him in the former one to Tillbrook, as one of his own friends; and it is possible that he may now be making inquiry in that quarter. Whatever the event may be, there has been no want of endeavours on my part, and I should have felt assured that you knew this, even if you had not told me so.

I do not see, my dear Neville, that you have any error with which to reproach yourself, either on James's account, or your own. We can but act as seemeth best to us, upon good motives; the issue is not in our own hands. Thus much as relates to your brother's removal. In your own case, you have only to repent that sufficient care was not taken for the preservation of your health when you exchanged a very active for a sedentary life; and this, which of all errors is the most venial, has brought with it sufficient punishment. Were you settled upon a cure of your own, you would presently feel a well-founded assurance that you were fairly performing the duties of your office, and fully equal to them; for you would catechize the children, look after your parishioners, win their confidence and goodwill,

and be to them what a Church pastor should be to his flock. Healthier and wealthier you might have been, had you continued in the precincts of Cheapside, and useful you would always have been, and happy also, but not so happy as you are now, not so useful as you will be, whenever you take possession of a rectory. I wish there were one at my disposal, for your sake.

William Taylor surprised me by his appearance here about three weeks ago, on his way from an expedition into Scotland. He stayed only one day, during which we saw Lodore in full glory. Friend [Amelia] appeared soon after him, in stiffer garb and more primitive bonnet than when I saw her at Norwich, and corrupting the King's English with more malice prepense. She went from hence to Lowther; but though she *thou'd* and *thee'd* them with great intrepidity, I am told that the sinful word Lady slipped not unfrequently from her lips; and that when Rogers, as if to put her young virtue to the proof, said things and told stories at which she ought not to have laughed, the temptation was sometimes so strong that she was obliged to stuff her handkerchief into her mouth, and still the struggling titter came forth, the old Eve prevailing in the contest. I like her in spite of her Quakerism, nay, perhaps the better for it; for it must always be remembered in what sect she was bred up, among what persons she had lived, and that religion was never presented to her in a serious form till she saw it in drab.

Remember me to your twofold family in all its members, and with especial love and kindness to your excellent mother, with whom, were it not for your sakes, I should almost condole that, having been on the threshold of heaven, her entrance should have been deferred. God bless you, my dear Neville.—Yours most affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

202. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Friday, Dec. 8, 1826.

My dear Grosvenor,—Hear the second part of the history of my parliamentary affairs :—

On Wednesday, I received a note from Harry, saying that a plan had been formed for purchasing a qualification for me ; that Sir Robert Inglis had just communicated this to him, and was then gone to Lord R. to ask him to keep the borough open : that he (Harry) doubted whether a sufficient subscription could be raised, but supposed that under these circumstances I should not refuse the seat ; and desired my answer by return of post, that he might be authorized to say I would sit in Parliament if they gave me an estate of £300 a year !

I rubbed my eyes to ascertain that I was awake, and that this was no dream. I heard Cuthbert his Greek lesson, and read his Dutch one with him. I corrected a proof-sheet. And then, the matter having had time to digest, I wrote in reply, as follows :—

My dear H.,—An estate of £300 a year would be a very agreeable thing for me, Robert Lackland, and I would willingly change that name for it : the convenience, however, of having an estate is not the question which I am called upon to determine. It is (supposing the arrangement possible,—which I greatly doubt), whether I will enter into public life at an age when a wise man would begin to think of retiring from it : whether I will place myself in a situation for which neither my habits, nor talents, nor disposition are suited ; and in which I feel and know it to be impossible that I should fulfil the expectations of those who would raise the subscription. Others ought to believe me, and you will, when I declare that in any public assembly I should have no confidence in myself, no promptitude, none of that presence of mind, without which no man can produce any effect there. This ought to be believed, because I have them all when acting

in my proper station, and in my own way, and therefore cannot be supposed to speak from timidity, nor with any affectation of humility. Sir Robert Inglis and his friends have the Protestant cause at heart, and imagine that I could serve it in Parliament. I have it at heart also; deeply at heart; and will serve it to the utmost of my power, 'so help me God!' But it is not by speaking in public that I can serve it. It is by bringing forth the knowledge which so large a part of my life has been passed in acquiring; by exposing the real character and history of the Romish Church, systematically and irrefragably (which I can and will do) in books which will be read now and hereafter; which must make a part, hereafter, of every historical library; and which will live and act when I am gone. If I felt that I could make an impression in Parliament, even then I would not give up future utility for present effect. I have too little ambition of one kind, and too much of another, to make the sacrifice. But I could make no impression there. I should only disappoint those who had contributed to place me there; and in this point of view it is a matter of prudence, as well as in all others, of duty, to hold my first resolution, and remain contentedly in that station of life to which it has pleased God to call me. If a seat in Parliament were made compatible with my circumstances, it would not be so with my inclinations, habits, and pursuits; and therefore I must remain Robert Lackland.

You will not suppose that I despise £300 a year, or should lightly refuse it. But I think you will feel, upon reflection, that I have decided properly in refusing to sit in Parliament under any circumstances. R. S.

To-day (Friday) Harry has received this letter from me; and I have received the following one from him:—

'My dear Robert,—Lord R.'s answer to Sir Robert Inglis is nearly in the following words:—"Mr. —— was returned upon public grounds solely, without previous communication, or even acquaintance. It has since been seen under his handwriting that the situation was

not to his taste, and did not accord with his habits of life."

'I believe these are the very words of Lord R.'s answer to an excellent letter from Inglis. Thus ends your very singular adventure. If you could have got an estate by it, the story would have told better. As it is, the estimation in which you are held by many great and good men has been proved in the most satisfactory manner. Sir Robert did not tell me the names of those who had expressed their willingness to subscribe, nor with whom the scheme had originated (not with himself), but he seemed sanguine of success. H. H. S.'

God bless you! R. S.

203. To Sir R. H. Inglis, Bart.

(*Without date.*)

My dear Sir Robert,—For some time I have been intending to thank you for your very kind intentions and exertions in my behalf, and to explain, more clearly than could be done in a hasty reply to my brother's letter, the motives upon which my decision in that matter was formed. The event has proved that it was fortunate, but I wish you to be satisfied that it was *rightly made*,—I might say *deliberately* also, for though little expecting to be invited in such a manner, I have often said, and always felt, that no prospects of ambition or advantage should induce me to enter into public life.

In replying to my brother, I spoke only of unfitness for Parliament, and disinclination for it, which were in themselves sufficient reasons. I did not speak of the separation from my family for four or five months in the year, which would have been necessary, nor of the probable effect upon my health, nor of the interruption of pursuits which, from other causes, have been and are already too much interrupted.

If I had taken a seat in Parliament when it was at my option, the express condition was that of doing my duty there; and of this a pretty regular attendance

must have been an indispensable part. But early and regular hours are necessary for my constitution, which is not strong, has always been accustomed to this, and has been shaken. And though I have neither the habits nor the feelings of a valetudinarian, some management is required to keep me as well as I am, and the loss of sleep is what I could not bear. Separate from my family I must have been during the session: this would have interfered with the education of my little boy, would have been some loss to my daughters, and would have still more depressed the spirits of my wife, which are constitutionally low, and have received shocks from which I fear there is little hope of their recovering. The motives, therefore, must be very strong which could overpower these considerations: in these times I know of no public duties which could be strong enough; nor is there anything on the score of private advantage, which should lead me to change the whole system of my life. It is very possible that, being in Parliament, I might have made my way into some minor office, which would have given me a good income: this is even likely, because I have friends who would have helped me when they saw me in a situation where I could help myself, and because my capability and fitness for such business might have been acknowledged. But in that case no leisure would have been left for my own pursuits, and all hope must have been given up of completing those projects, upon which and in preparing for which the greater part of my life has been employed. Thus I should have done worse than buried my talent; I should have thrown it away.

That my way of life has been directed by a merciful Providence, I feel and verily believe. I have been saved from all ill consequences of error and temerity, and by a perilous course have been led into paths of pleasantness and peace; a sufficient indication that I ought to remain in them. Throughout this whole business I have never felt any temptation to depart from this conviction. I may be wrong in many things, but not in the quiet confidence with which I know that

I am in my proper place. *Inveni portum; spes et fortuna valete;* the only change to which I look forward is a possible migration to the south when my lease expires, if I should live so long. But there are so many obstacles in the way of this, that I may probably be spared from what to me would be a very painful and unwilling removal.

This is an egotistic letter. I felt, however, that some such exposition was due to you; lest I should seem either to have acted unreasonably, or to feel unthankfully. But be assured in this whole odd episode of my life, there is nothing which I shall remember with more pleasure than the very kind and friendly part which you have taken in it.—Believe me, dear Sir Robert, Yours very truly, R. S.

I must not forget that I have a favour to ask. An old friend, for whom I have a very high and well-founded regard, is to be balloted for at the Athenaeum on the 9th of February. Kenyon is his name. Upon the list of members I see the names of Mr. Dealtry and Mr. H. S. Thornton. Will you say to them that I should be greatly obliged by their votes on this occasion, and that they could not be bestowed upon a man better qualified in all respects for the admission which he is seeking?

204. To the Rev. Neville White

Keswick, May 5, 1827.

My dear Neville,—I do not see how these ministerial changes can affect my brother Tom's future prospects. My means have always been precarious. My books are less productive than they were ten years ago; very materially so, as Longman could tell you. Their novelty is gone by, and with all the reputation which I have fairly won I have never been a fashionable, still less a popular, author. At the end of the first twelve months' sale my profits upon the *Tale of Paraguay* fell short of eighty pounds. I have, God be thanked, been able to make a moderate provision for

my family, but not by anything that I have laid by; solely by my life insurance, my books, copyrights, and papers. In other respects I am in a worse situation than I was ten or fifteen years ago. My poems had then a much greater sale, and I stood upon better ground in the *Quarterly Review*. I am writing a paper at present for the first number of a *Foreign Quarterly*; possibly it is the last that I may ever write for a review. There was an engagement which might have enabled me at once to have come to this resolution, but the last year's failure compelled the publisher to recede from it. I do not, however, expect any difficulty in renewing it elsewhere, and have no fear that that Providence which has hitherto made the labour of the day sufficient for its support, will withdraw from me its continued blessing. I have always done for my brother Tom all I could, and not seldom to my own embarrassment in so doing.

The question about National Education you will see discussed in my *Colloquies*, when they are completed. Here is the gist of the question. The human mind is like the earth, which never lies idle. You have a piece of garden ground. Neglect it, and it will be covered with weeds, useless to yourself and noxious to your neighbours. To lay it out in flowers and shrubbery is what you do not want. Cultivate it then for common fruits and culinary plants. So with poor children. Why should they be made worse servants, worse labourers, worse mechanics, for being taught their Bible, their Christian duties, and the elements of useful knowledge? I am no friend of the London University, nor to Mechanics' Institutes. There is a purpose in all these things of excluding religion, and preparing the way for the overthrow of the Church. But God will confound their devices; and my principle is, that where a religious foundation is laid, the more education the better. Will you have the lower class *Christians* or *brutes*?

God bless you, my dear friend!—Yours affectionately,

R. S.

205. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, July 10, 1827.

Here we are, Edith and Bertha the better for the Harrogate waters, their mother only better inasmuch as the new circumstances there may sometimes serve to withdraw her from the melancholy and almost hopeless course of her habitual thoughts and feelings —a sore grief, of which I never before said as much as is now expressed here to any human being, but which presses upon me more heavily than my bodily infirmities.

Send to your circulating library for *Isaac Comnenus*. I may whisper to you that it is the work of Henry Taylor, my fellow-traveller of the last and the preceding year, and was in part written while he was waiting for my recovery at Leyden. You will find in it originality, and feeling, and genius.

I have been letting Murray and his editor know that the incivility with which they have treated me during the last six months must be carried no further, and in consequence they are both my very humble servants. Still, however, it is uncertain whether I shall continue to bear any part in the *Quarterly Review*. Murray is, as you may suppose, in a woful quandary, not knowing which course it is his interest to take, but beginning to apprehend that it is the safest way to keep the *Review* in its old course. During the perplexity Lockhart has been in no very comfortable state; the result I still consider doubtful, though Lockhart writes as if he thought otherwise. If the journal is to be guided by Croker's influence, and follow Mr. Canning's crooked path, of course I withdraw from it. If it keep to the better part, I have told the editor that my last paper, which he has so unceremoniously withheld, must be inserted, and that no future communication is to be postponed from one number to another, and that this is the *condition* on which those communications are to be continued, for writing in any periodical work as

I do only for the purpose of helping out the means of a moderate expenditure, 'I can neither afford to waste my labour nor to wait for its wages.' Upon this plain statement he is now chewing the cud. Meantime I have enough to do with the *Colloquies*, which from their nature occupy much time in the composition, and with the *Peninsular War*. Dear friend, God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

206. To JOHN RICKMAN

Keswick, July 30, 1827.

MY DEAR RICKMAN,—I am out of humour with myself respecting Lord Colchester, as if from shyness on my part there had been a want of due attention to him. He called on his arrival to thank me for having made all arrangements for his movement in this neighbourhood, and came just as I had a party assembling for dinner; and having that party I did not, of course, ask him for the evening, which otherwise I should have done. The next day I went to his inn a little after seven in the evening, meaning, if he had not been wearied with the round which he had taken, to have asked him to drink tea in a pleasanter room than the Inn affords. But he proved to be at dinner, for which reason I merely left my card; and then, because his rank stood in the way, and made me fearful of appearing to press myself upon him, I did not write a note to invite him up, which I should have done had he been Mr. Abbott. The next day brought me a very obliging note from him, after his departure. He has had from us good directions and commissariat services, but not that personal attention which I wished to have paid him.

In this way, through a constitutional bashfulness, which the publicity of authorship has not overcome, and through the sort of left-handed management (I do not mean *sinister*) which that bashfulness occasions, I have repeatedly appeared neglectful of others', and have really been so of my own interests. Upon the score of such neglect, no man living has more cause

for reproach than I have; but it passes off with only a transitory sense of inward shame, occurring more or less painfully when occasion calls to mind some particular sin of omission.

I believe, my dear R., that most men by the time they have reached our age are ready, whatever their pursuits may have been, to agree with Solomon, that they end in vanity. If they are not mere clods, muckworms, they come to this conclusion,—wealth, reputation, power, are alike unsatisfactory when they are attained, alike insufficient to content the heart of man, which is ever discontented till it has found its rest. This it finds in the prospect of immortality, in the anticipation of a state where there shall be no change, except such as is implied in perpetual progression. When we have learnt to look forward with that hope, then we look back upon the past without regret, and are able to bear the present, however heavy and painful sometimes may be its pressure. There is no other support for a broken spirit; no other balm for a wounded heart.

You have overworked yourself, which I have ever been afraid of doing. The wonder is that you have not suffered more severely and irremediably; and that while so working you should have yet been able to lay in that knowledge of other kinds, which renders you (as I have found you during well nigh thirty years) the most instructive of all companions. Ant-like, you have toiled during the summer, and have stored your nest: my summer work leaves me as little prepared for winter as the grasshopper; but this is rather my fortune than my fault, and therefore no matter of self-reproach.

What you have to do is to extricate yourself from all unnecessary and ungrateful business, and give the time which you may thus gain to more healthful and genial pursuits,—books, to which inclination would lead you, and, above all, travelling. I wish you could have gone with Henry Taylor and his father—a man whom you would especially like; still more do I wish you

would come here and take a course of mountaineering,—upon which I should very gladly enter, and which would be to my bodily benefit. And then we might talk at leisure and at will over the things of this world and the next.

God bless you, my dear friend ! R. S.

207. To Henry Taylor

Keswick, Sept. 13, 1827.

My dear H. T.,—I am sorry to hear that cares have been knocking at your door; they must have gone out of their way, methinks, to call there. I thought that you had no thorns either in your sides or your pillow. Tidings after an absence of a few weeks afford indeed at all times matter for uneasy apprehension; and if you and I had this to learn, the two journies which we have taken together would have taught it us.

I found a great want of you (as they say in this country) during your absence. One likes to have one's friends in a local habitation where at any time they may be found; to be out of reach is too like being out of the world. It often came into my thoughts that if H. T. were in London I should have written to him upon such and such occasions, and quite as often that I should have had some brief notices of the strange turns of the wheel.

You distrust opinions, you tell me, when you perceive a strong tenour of feeling in the writer who maintains them. The distrust is reasonable, and is especially to be borne in mind in reading history. My opinions are (thank God !) connected with strong feelings concerning them, but not such as can either disturb my temper or cloud my discernment, much less pervert what I will venture to call the natural equity of my mind. I proceed upon these postulates,—1. That revealed religion is true; 2. that the connexion between Church and State is necessary; 3. that the Church of England is the best ecclesiastical establishment which exists at present, or has yet existed; 4. that both Church and

State require great amendments; 5. that both are in great danger; and 6. that a revolution would destroy the happiness of one generation, and leave things at last worse than it found them.

If our institutions are worth preserving we cannot be attached to them too strongly, remembering always that the only way to preserve them is by keeping them in good repair. The two duties upon which I insist are those of conservation and improvement. We must improve our institutions if we would preserve them; but if any go to work upon the foundations, down must come the building.

How is it possible to reflect upon the history of former times without inquiring what have been the good and evil consequences of the course which things have taken at the age which you are considering? It is, surely, no useless speculation to inquire whether good results which have been dearly purchased might not have been obtained at less cost. If I were to build a house, I should consult my neighbour, who might tell me how I might go to work more advantageously than he had done. *What might have been* is a profitable subject for speculation, because it may be found useful for what yet *may be*.

God bless you! R. S.

208. To Mrs. Hughes

Keswick, Sept. 21, 1827.

My dear Mrs. Hughes,—For some time past an intention of writing to you has been in my head; but something or other has always stopped it on the progress which, as laid down by John Bunyan, it ought to have made into the fingers, and thence to the pen, in order to be dribbled daintily upon paper. Your letter, which I have just received, has brought it to dribbling.

I took my whole family to Harrogate for the first three weeks in June, hoping that the waters and, perhaps, still more the change of place and circum-

stances, might be beneficial to some of them, and that it would answer the purpose for myself of a longer journey, which I had not heart to undertake. To a certain degree the objects were answered, as well, indeed, as could reasonably be expected. I escaped from the hay-asthma with a visit of one month, instead of a visitation of three; by running away from it the two preceding years it seems that the hold of the disease has been weakened, though its habit is not destroyed.

We went thither through Craven, visiting Wethercot Cave and Gordale Scar on the way, things which, if you have not seen, you ought to make a special journey for the sake of seeing; and we returned by way of Wensley Dale, which is also worth a pilgrimage. Since our return, at the beginning of July, I have been so continually beset by visitors, shoal after shoal, that I have not been able to settle fairly to work for a single day. What little I could do has been done in the odds and ends of broken time; and little enough it is, Heaven knows. Winter will, as usual, bring with it a cessation of such interruptions; and I shall be left to myself and my books.

What, meantime, have I done, or what am I doing? you ask! I wrote a paper upon the 'Dominion of the Moors in Spain' for the *Foreign Quarterly*. The old *Quarterly Review* had laid me on the shelf; and it seemed likely that I should find it necessary to part company with it, which I certainly would have done if it had veered about and stood on the liberal tack. Explanation, however, took place. My paper upon Sister Providence, in reply to Mr. Butler's apology for Sister Nativité, having been set aside for two numbers without ceremony or a word of communication to me upon the subject, appears in the forthcoming number. I am reviewing Hallam's 'Essence of Whig-vinegar' for the Christmas number; and Murray stands better in my opinion than he did before. He is willing, at last, that I should reprint such of my papers as are worth revision; so I am preparing to collect and arrange

them, and shall begin with two volumes of *Essays Moral and Political*. If there is a sale for these, I shall follow them with the Ecclesiastical, Historical, Literary, and Miscellaneous papers, each separately. This I have long been desirous of doing, that I might not be held responsible for any other person's opinions, and that my own might be fairly and fully set forth.

I have not even seen the *Life of Napoleon*. There are many reasons why it could not but disappoint the expectations which had been formed of it. It was not possible that Sir Walter could keep up as an historian the character which he had obtained as a novelist; and in the first announcement of this *Life* he had, not very wisely, promised something as stimulating as his novels. Alas! he forgot that there could be no stimulus of curiosity in it; for all persons above the age of five-and-twenty have read the History of Bonaparte in the newspaper. The book is far too long for fashionable reading, and just as much too short for its subject. He intended, I am told, to write upon the same scale as that which I have taken in the *Life of Nelson*; but upon that scale a Life of Bonaparte would require at least nine of my quartos, instead of such a volume as his; for it is the history of Europe during twenty years. Add to this that his enemies have been eager to run down a lame work, and that it was introduced with a sort of trick and puffery which made his friends sorry; and there will be no difficulty in accounting for the cold reception which it has found. If the booksellers are the losers, it will be no matter. The next tale will not be expected with less eagerness, nor read with less pleasure; and his permanent reputation will be as little affected by this *Life*, as Fielding's is by his comedies.

My *Colloquies* will be ready in the spring. I am about to edit J. Wolfe's *Letters*, and prefix a memoir of his life. The *Life* is but a drama of one act, but that a brilliant one; and as the consequences have proved of permanent importance, which has seldom been the case in modern wars. I can make something of it.

The letters were not worth publishing; but as the owners chose that they should be published, I am very willing thus to preface them. Moreover, I have undertaken to introduce some verses written by an old servant, whose unpoetical name is John Jones. Perhaps I may come to you for help in soliciting subscriptions; but this is not yet determined: it will, however, be but a trifling matter for one little volume, from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 10*s.* at the utmost. You will be pleased with the simplicity and modesty of his letters, amused with the account of himself, and pleased also to see how much intellectual enjoyment may be attained, under the most unfavourable circumstances, by those who know how to look for it. This is a theme on which I hope to preach a useful discourse in the preface; so that I have two objects in this undertaking:—to raise a little money which may help this poor man in his old age, and to dwell upon certain truths which are at present mixed up with a great deal of mischief, but which in themselves are most salutary and important.

More, moreover, I have some verses in the stocks,—a ballad of some length, which promises well, and therefore is likely to please you; and a Pindaric ode in which the grave manner is so queerly suited to the subject, that perhaps it may please nobody but such another odd person as myself, if it happens to meet with such. There are not many who can be amused with moody mirth.

Our kindest remembrance to Dr. Hughes, and to your son. I too am deep in the Statutes; but it is in those which have long been obsolete. God bless you, my dear Mrs. Hughes.—Yours very truly, R. S.

209. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, October, 1827.

You are a good and faithful friend, dear Caroline, ready for any service, and never sparing trouble where service may be rendered. Thank you for both your

letters and their inclosures. The letter of General Wolfe which was inclosed has been printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*: it is valuable for little else than for containing his opinion of Scanderbeg, of whom he had probably read in Knolles's *History of the Ottoman Empire*, a book which Johnson has praised highly (indeed, above its deserts), and which, on that recommendation, I purchased and read when I was a youth at Oxford.

To-day I returned the proofs of the severest criticism which I have ever written. It is upon Hallam's *Constitutional History*, a book composed in the worst temper, and upon the worst principles. It contains even a formal justification of the murder of Lord Strafford. I am acquainted with the author, and should therefore have abstained from this act of justice upon him, if he had not called it forth by some remarks in his notes upon *The Book of the Church*, which take from him all right of complaint. You will see that I can be angry, not on my own score, because every attack upon that Book only serves to prove its strength; but where there is a spirit of detraction and malevolence manifested towards those who are entitled to respect, and gratitude, and veneration, my blood stirs when I see them traduced, and the same feeling which brings tears into my eyes when I think of them at other times passes on such an occasion into an anger which I do not account among the emotions to be repented of.

One of the first movements which I shall undertake after reaching London in May (if we both live so long) will be to embark in one of the steam-coaches, which are soon to travel upon your road, and be whisked to Southampton. But I will make it my last movement, if you will muster heart and hope to travel northwards, under my care, and pass the remainder of the summer and autumn with us. Can you? Will you? Nothing is more likely to do you good than this mountain air.

The verses which you sent Alaric Watts have been printed in the *Standard*, with a note (I suppose of his) saying upon what occasion they were written. I put

them into my wife's hand, and she expressed that sort of pleasure which deep grief is capable of feeling. The pain would have been there in any case: the gratification was so much gain. Thank you, dear friend—thank you, thank you, and God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

210. To MRS. HUGHES

Keswick, Dec. 6, 1827.

MY DEAR MRS. HUGHES,—You are the most efficient person in the world when any kind office is to be done. 'Yeoman's service' is nothing to what you do. If I had ten such friends as you, I would publish by subscription myself, and defy the booksellers.

I was from home, with part of my family, when your former letter arrived. We were passing a few days at Netherhall, close by Maryfort,—a strange old house, part of which is known to have been standing in the reign of Edward II, and probably something has been added to it, or altered in it, in every generation since. When first I knew it, the entrance was half filled with heathen gods, and the long passages, of course, infested by ghosts. The gods were not modern statues, but good, venerable, old heathen deities, dug up in a Roman station close at hand, upon the estate. A great many monuments were built into the front of the house as long ago as in Elizabeth's days, when Camden saw and described them. More was afterwards found than the hall could conveniently contain; the late Mr. Senhouse, therefore (a singular old man), instead of building a room for their reception, appropriated to their use (I must tell the story) a certain apartment in the garden, which I must not further describe than by saying that it was the oddest place in the world for a museum. And thither, with the imperturbable serenity of an antiquarian, he used to conduct his guests, and explain the inscriptions to them, without ever considering how the guests or the gods liked it. To be sure there was some oddity in this; but, although

the place was ill-chosen, he took care to choose his times and seasons well, and so, except in accidental cases, there was no inconvenience arising.

But Lysons the antiquary undertook, as you know, some five-and-twenty years ago, to compile a *Magna Britannia*, and, in the course of his travels for that object, he came into Cumberland, and proceeded, as Camden had done before him, to Netherhall. He was interested with the stones which had been built in the wall, sadly as they had suffered then by the weather; he was delighted with the antiquities in the hall, but when he came to the Pantheon he was enchanted. Enchanted I say, because he forgot everything except the altars and gods before him. On the following morning before breakfast, there he and the draughtsman whom he had brought with him, took their seats. There, after much search, they were discovered after breakfast had long been kept waiting for them; but there was no occasion to make further search, for thither they returned the instant they rose from the breakfast-table; there they remained till dinner. Time being precious to travellers they wasted no time after dinner, but resumed their occupation, and the evening sun went down upon them there. The next day it was the same. Never had these gods been so faithfully delineated, never had the inscriptions been so accurately copied, and so patiently investigated. But think of the inconvenience of the family!—There was the old lady of the house, a most regular person! there was her daughter-in-law, and her little granddaughter, there was her niece, there was Lady (what is her name?), Lord Stanhope's daughter who married the country surgeon, there were I know not how many ladies besides visiting at Netherhall, for it was in the summer season of touring and visiting. And all day long, all the long summer's day, did these determined antiquarians keep their seat. A watch was kept at the windows, but in vain. The children were dispatched to look in from time to time, even that hint was disregarded; Lysons and the draughtsman went on with

their work, and so it continued during their whole stay; and in the traditions of Netherhall the visit of the antiquarians is remembered as the greatest event that ever occurred there, since one of the family was killed at the door of the tower by the Scotch marauders.

There is another story relating to this family (one of the oldest in the county) which ought also to be preserved, and which shall be, if any friend of mine should ever write the history of Charles I. In his unhappy days the possessor of Netherhall had only two children, both young men; the younger was serving in the King's army when his brother died, thus the only hope of preserving an old and honourable line rested upon him, and the parents, therefore, were anxiously desirous that he should no longer expose himself in the war. But knowing well that he would disregard their desires unless urged with personal earnestness, they sent a youth of their tenantry with injunctions to bring him back. The messenger arrived when a battle was expected, and the result, as you will anticipate, was, that instead of bringing back his young master, to whom he was personally attached—for they had been playmates—he remained to partake the danger with him. The battle of Naseby ensued, and Senhouse was left among the dead. The young man searched the field on the following day, that he might pay him the last duties; he found him breathing, though dreadfully wounded, and his life was preserved. The descendants of both these persons continue to reside where their fathers did; and I have seen the sword which was used in that battle.

One more anecdote relating to the Great Rebellion. When the King's affairs were at the worst, the head of the Lowther family confided to his son that in those evil times he had secreted ten thousand pieces of gold, and told him where they might be found. The immediate use which the young man made of this knowledge was to take the money, and raise a troop of horse with it for the King's service. Lord Lonsdale told me this,

with proper feeling, and showed me the portrait of this ancestor.

You will think me very idle that I should have written such a letter as this. Yet if I had as many hands as a heathen god, every one of them ought to be employed at this time. Let me whisper to you a confession, that I am sometimes perversely inclined rather to do anything else than that thing which ought just at that time to be done.

With kindest remembrances to Dr. Hughes from all my household, believe me, my dear Mrs. Hughes,—
Yours very truly, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

PS. Look at some verses in the *Literary Souvenir*, p. 113; they are written by a dear friend of mine on the death of—you will know who.

211. To THE RIGHT HON. C. W. W. WYNN, M.P.

Keswick, Jan. 27, 1828.

MY DEAR WYNN,—It is no matter of surprise to me, considering the system of intrigue which has long been going on, that you should have been thrown out in the recent changes; nor ought it to be matter of regret, when there appears so little of consistency in what has been done, and so little assignable principle for what is doing. Yet I did not expect it as a consequence of any change short of one which should have made the question of emancipation the test of exclusion from office, and any such change was evidently far distant. I certainly expected that poor Canning's intrigues would cost him his life, and that Lord Goderich would break down under a weight which would be too heavy for far stronger shoulders. But that you, who stood fair with both parties, should be sacrificed, and in an arrangement, too, which is made up of compromises, and to make room for one who takes the same general line of politics, was not among my anticipations, till it became apparent what course things were taking. What a series of perplexities and mischiefs have arisen

from Canning's restless intrigues and inordinate ambition!

Time has hitherto laid his hand so lightly upon you, and your habits are so much those of public life, that with all the capability of enjoying privacy, and all the tastes which render it respectable and happy, you are likely still to bear a part in affairs; and as long as you keep on the stage you are a person of too much consequence to be overlooked in the mutations which may soon be expected, and cannot long be delayed. Meantime you will have leisure to perform that good work of consolidating the Election Petition Laws, which no other person can do so well.

I do not augur well of the new administration. Better than the last I hold it to be (with the exception of your case), by all that it throws out. But it is still like the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and coarse materials predominate in the unamalgamable composition. I doubt whether they have sufficient confidence in themselves and in each other to resolutely withstand that abominable influence which has become paramount; and I am sure that no ministry which yields to it can deserve the confidence of the nation.

Their opponents who, had they continued in power, would have had the entertaining task of endeavouring to muzzle the Irish wolf-dogs, will not employ themselves in setting those dogs on; a much easier operation. It was no easy matter to bind Furor in the *Fairy Queen*, but it proved far more dangerous to let him loose.

There is a large interpolation in my reviewal of Hallam's *History*, all that comes after what is said of the 'Icon', till the last paragraph beginning, 'But we must conclude.' Some 'Edwards' is the writer, whom I know not. It is not altogether accordant with my own views, nor indeed in the main; but when the proofs were sent for my sanction I had not time to make any material alterations, and the few which were made were mislaid after they reached London. This might vex me a little, if I ever allowed myself to be

disquieted by trifles, or rather, if they could ever disquiet me; for I must not take credit for what belongs to the disposition which I brought with me into the world, and which, if it were not thus natural, might well have been produced by the causes for real uneasiness which have fallen to my lot in my passage through life, and which are not likely to diminish as I approach toward the close of my journey.

It is now forty years since you and I first met in Dean's Yard! To me it proved the most beneficial meeting which ever befell me; and had I followed any of the ordinary walks of life, it would doubtless have been the means of advancing me in any profession to the heights of professional ambition. Perhaps, of the whole three hundred who then composed the eternal body puerile of Westminster, there were no two whose future course and condition in society might have been more truly predicted from their dispositions, inclinations, and the circumstances in which they were placed. But had it not been for your aid I should have been irretrievably wrecked when I ran upon the shoals, with all sail set, in the very outset of my voyage. You have been the means of putting many in the way of fortune; but you never can have rendered to any one a more essential benefit, nor one that has been more deeply and thankfully felt. I have, I trust, enough of the spirit of independence, but I have none of its pride. Men are as much the better for the good offices which they receive as for those which they bestow.

My *Colloquies* will be published about the time of my proposed appearance in town. The second volume is half printed. I think of dedicating them, in the fewest words, to Lord Radnor, just as a public mark of thankfulness for an intended benefit. It is needless to say how much I have been delighted with the extracts from Reginald's journal in the *Q. R.* Another reason for regretting your divorce from Mrs. Company is that no successor is likely to promote his (Reginald's) views for introducing religious truth into the East, with the feeling which you have on that subject, both

for his sake, and from a sense of its infinite importance. Weight, however, your opinion must always carry, and power will again be in your hands at no distant time. God bless you, my dear Wynn.—Yours most affectionately, R. S.

212. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, March 30, 1828.

My dear Grosvenor,—There used to be a quicker interchange of letters between you and me when we were younger, and each, with less to think of, had a great deal more to say.

I think you will see me, God willing, about the third week in May; but my way is not as yet quite clear; nor am I sure what stoppages it may be expedient to make upon the road. The only sure thing is, that I shall remain as short a time as possible in and about town, having to make a wide western circuit on the way home. I should take this circuit with much greater satisfaction, if you would make a good honest hearty engagement to meet me at Keswick on my arrival there. The man Grosvenor ought to bear in mind that neither he, nor the man Southey, have any right to put off things from year to year, in reliance upon the continuance of life and ability; that they are both on the high road to threescore, both in that stage of existence in which all flesh may fitlier be called hay than grass, because the blossom is over, and the freshness, and the verdure, and the strength are past. But let us meet while we can. Nothing would do more good both to Miss Page and you than to pass your autumn here, and nothing would do me more good than to have you here.

The paper upon Emigration in this last *Quarterly Review* is mine, or rather upon the causes which render a regulated Emigration necessary. Our fabric of society, Grosvenor, is somewhat in the condition that the Brunswick Theatre was before the crash,—too much weight suspended from the roof; and to make things

worse, we allow all sort of undermining, and are willing to let everything be removed that was erected for securing the building. They talk, I see, of abolishing the Exchequer. I will forgive them if they do it in time to emancipate you; yet I wish you to have the next step first, and then, Grosvenor, peradventure, you may be the last auditor, and I the last Laureate. Well, it will matter little to us when we are in the Ghost: you will not haunt Palace Yard, and I shall not haunt the levee.

God bless you! R. S.

213. To John May

Keswick, Sept. 22, 1828.

My dear Friend,—Before this reaches you, you will have heard that my dear uncle is relieved from the burden of age and infirmity which pressed upon him so heavily in his latter days. This day brought me the news of his deliverance, and it was the first that I had of his illness; but I was prepared for it, knowing that the first breath of wind must shake the dry leaf from the tree.

It is somewhat remarkable that either on the night before, or after his decease (I am not certain which, but think it was the former) I was very much disturbed throughout the night in dreams concerning him. I seldom remember to have suffered so much in sleep, or to have wept more than I did then, thinking that I saw him, as I had last seen him, bent and suffering, helplessly and hopelessly, and that he reproved or rather reasoned with me for allowing myself to be so affected. This is perfectly explicable; but it impressed me strongly at the time; and if in some of his latter hours his thoughts were directed towards me (as they may have been), I could find a solution which would accord with my philosophy, though it may not be dreamt of in that of other men.

I have long looked for this event, and however important in one point of view the prolongation of his

life might appear, I could not, if wishes or prayers could have done it, have stretched him upon the rack of this world longer.

There is some comfort in thinking that he now knows, if he never knew it before, how truly I loved and honoured him. I often indulge the belief that towards our dead friends our hearts are open and our desires known.

God bless you, my dear friend !—Yours most affectionately, R. SOUTHEY.

214. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

Keswick, Nov. 28, 1828.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—You may get the whole of Sir Thomas Browne's works more easily perhaps than the *Hydriotaphia* in a single form. The folio is neither scarce nor dear, and you will find it throughout a book to your heart's content. If I were confined to a score of English books, this I think would be one of them ; nay, probably, it would be one if the selection were cut down to twelve. My library, if reduced to those bounds, would consist of Shakespeare, Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton ; Lord Clarendon ; Jackson, Jeremy Taylor, and South ; Isaac Walton, Sidney's *Arcadia*, Fuller's *Church History*, and Sir Thomas Browne ; and what a wealthy and well-stored mind would that man have, what an inexhaustible reservoir, what a Bank of England to draw upon for profitable thoughts and delightful associations, who should have fed upon them !

I am glad you have passed six weeks pleasurably and profitably, though grudging a little that they were not spent at Keswick, where, among other things, I should like you to see the additional book-room that we have fitted up, and in which I am now writing, dividing my time between the two book-rooms by spells, so that both may be kept well aired. It would please you to see such a display of literary wealth, which is at once the pride of my eye, and the joy of my heart, and the food of my mind ; indeed, more than metaphorically,

meat, drink, and clothing for me and mine. I verily believe that no one in my station was ever so rich before, and I am very sure that no one in any station had ever a more thorough enjoyment of riches of any kind, or in any way. It is more delightful for me to live with books than with men, even with all the relish that I have for such society as is worth having.

I broke off this morning (not being a post day) for the sake of walking to Lodore, to see the cataract in its glory, after heavy rain in a wet season. A grand sight it was, and a grand sound. The walk, however, has just induced enough of agreeable lassitude to disincline me for my usual evening's penwork.

Your godson comes on well with his books, and if you are disposed to make him a godfather's gift, you may send him a *Septuagint*, that being a book in which Michaelis advises that all who are intended for the theological profession should be grounded at school. Intentions, or even wishes, I hardly dare form concerning him: but this I am sure is the best and happiest profession which a wise man could choose for himself, or desire for those who are dear to him. God bless you!

R. S.

215. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Feb. 13, 1829.

My dear G.,—A man of abilities at this time might do what Pitt did at the time of the coalition—deliver King and country from a set of tergiversators. It is not impossible that he may show himself. A great deal may be done if the bishops act with firmness.

Grieve at the course of things I will not. My days will not be long in the land to see the consequences, and I have done my duty for its own sake. There will be a great emigration of Protestants from Ireland. They have been most basely betrayed. It is well for Mr. Peel that my picture cannot (like the one at Otranto) walk out of its frame. It would read him a lecture if it could! Did I not speak truly when I said,

that in that man there was more Peel than Pith? Grieve I will not; but if I had not some sore cares, some vexations, and work enough for a dozen heads, and as many pair of hands, the state of affairs might perhaps occupy enough of my thoughts by day to keep me wakeful at night. To be sure, all I have to lose in any probable consequence of this measure is your godson's reversion of Lambeth; but it is mortifying to be *cackled* out of that constitution which was purchased so hardly. I have never heard one argument yet in favour of this suicidal concession which deserved to be called anything better than *cackle*.

After all, the point is far from a settlement. Ministers are pledged to *securities*—so is the King. The Papists have said they will give none, and the Bishop of London admits that he can find none. So, I am told, does Phillpotts. As for the impossibility of forming a Protestant Ministry, give me one that will stand resolutely upon its principles, and suffer no enemy, no neutral, to remain in office, and confer no benefits on any but its friends; round would come all the Kissarcii as readily as a weathercock veers with the wind, and, my life for it! the nation would stand by such an Administration.

I never wished myself a bishop till now; and if I were one now, I would make as good a figure in history as my kinsman, Bishop Ken, in the days of James II. My love to Miss Page and Henry. God bless you.

R. S.

216. To the Rev. Richard Shannon

Keswick, March 2, 1829.

Sir,—I thank you for your pamphlet; but I find that the extract from it in *The Times* is faithfully given, and I repeat that you have offered me a personal wrong, as unprovoked as it is unwarrantable. You have egregiously mistaken what my opinions were when we met. You have uncharitably misrepresented what they are now; and you have imputed to me

suspicious motives for a change, which has no other existence than in your own erroneous recollections and intemperate judgement.

If what you called the Catholic rights were touched upon in our table-talk, it is likely that a subject which was not at that time prominent would be lightly dismissed, willing as we both were to dwell rather upon points of agreement than of difference. I remember distinctly our difference concerning the union with England, and no other. Nor do I suppose that we differ now upon anything else relating to Ireland, except upon the question whether concession to the Romanists is likely to remedy the evils of that poor country, or to aggravate them. On that question it is well known to all my friends that my views have never undergone any alteration; and they were formed and declared as early as the year 1801, when the question first came before me. For what possible motive could I have dissembled them to you? I have never expressed an opinion which I did not hold; nor held one which I feared to express,—to maintain when I was persuaded that it was right, or to abandon if convinced that it was wrong.

With regard to the *Quarterly Review*, I never will allow that any one has a right to call upon me individually respecting any composition (not of a personal character) which has not my name affixed to it. But I maintain every argument which is urged in that paper; I assent to every assertion which it contains; I hold every opinion which is advanced there. Elsewhere I have published arguments, assertions, and opinions of the same kind, bearing upon the same conclusion. And whosoever charges me with inhumanity for this, or affirms that it is designed to render the Irish objects of horror and execration, calumniates me. I have been used to misrepresentation and calumny, but I did not expect them, Sir, from you.

It is a fair course of argument to assert that the miseries of Ireland were not caused by the laws which exclude the Roman Catholics from legislative power,

and to infer that they cannot be remedied by the repeal of those laws; and the question is, whether those premises can be proved by historical facts, and that inference established by just reasoning. You cannot condemn the British Government more severely than I do for having suffered the great body of the Irish people to remain to this day in as barbarous a state as the Scotch and the Welsh were till they were civilized, the first by their Kirk, the second by the laws. That the Irish have been thus barbarous from the earliest times may be learned by their own annals; that they are so still is proved at every assizes in that unhappy country, and almost in every newspaper. That they should be in this condition is the fault of their aristocracy, their landlords, and their priests, and the reproach of their rulers. But in what state of mind must that person be who accuses another of inhumanity, and holds him up as the enemy of the Irish nation, because he has asserted these truths!

I could say more, Sir, were it not vain to address one whose sense of the usages of society is so perverse that he deems it no breach of honour and hospitality to bring old table-talk before the public for the purpose of depreciating me; whose prepossessions are so obstinate that rather than think it possible his own recollections, after more than twenty years, may have deceived him, he will believe me guilty of deliberate falsehood: whose Christian charity is so little that because I think the Protestant Church establishments in England and Ireland will be endangered by admitting Roman Catholics into the legislature, he imputes suspicious motives to me, and accuses me of seeking to render the Irish people objects of horror and execration; and finally, whose notions of moral feeling are so curiously compounded that because these heinous charges are accompanied with some complimentary phrases to the injured person on the score of his talents, he is actually surprised that an indignant remonstrance should be expressed in a tone which he calls uncourteous! Finding it, therefore, in vain to expect from you a

reparation of the wrong which you have offered, I shall take a near and fitting opportunity for publicly contradicting your statement, and repelling your injurious charges and calumniatory insinuations.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

217. To HENRY TAYLOR

April 13, 1829.

MY DEAR H. T.,—I must not let you think ill of Verbeyst. He had sundry books to provide for me, some of which are not easily found; for example, the continuators of Baronius, a set of Surius, and Colgar's very rare *Lives of the Irish Saints*, without which I could not review O'Connor's collection of the Res Hibernicarum Script. Last year, when he had collected these, his wife fell ill and died. *Bien des malheurs*, he says, he has had since he saw me, and that they had left him in a lethargic state, from which he is only beginning to recover.

You must not think ill of Verbeyst: he has the best stock of books I ever met with, and at the lowest prices. No, H. T., if you had bought as many books of Verbeyst as I have, and had them in your eye (as they are now in mine), and had talked with him as much as I have done (and in as good French), and had drunk his Rhenish wine and his beer, which is not the best in the world because there is, or was, as good at West Kennet, but than which there is not, never was, and never can be better;—no, H. T., if you remembered the beer, the wine, and the man himself, as I do, you would not and could not entertain even the shadow of an ill or an angry thought towards Verbeyst. Think ill of our fathers which are in the Row, think ill of John Murray, think ill of Colburn, think ill of the whole race of bibliopoles, except Verbeyst, who is always to be thought of with liking and respect.

A joyful day it will be when the books come, and he promises them by the first ship,—perhaps it may

be the second. But come they will at last, if wind and waters permit; and, if all be well, when they arrive I shall not envy any man's happiness (were I given to envy) on that day.

I have told you of the Spaniard who always put on his spectacles when he was about to eat cherries, that they might look the bigger and more tempting. In like manner I make the most of my enjoyments, and, though I do not cast my cares away, I pack them in as little compass as I can, carry them as conveniently as I can for myself, and never let them annoy others. God bless you! R. S.

218. To Walter Savage Landor

Keswick, Aug. 22, 1829.

My dear Landor,—If Madame Christophe, who was once Queen of Hayti, be in Florence (as she is supposed to be), you will do her an act of kindness if you will inform her that Thomas Clarkson has some money of hers in his hands, which he will send to her in any way that she may point out, or pay into any person's hands, according to her direction. The money is about £140 sterling, and she knows nothing about it at this time. Lest she should have forgotten his address, I add it here,—Playford Hall, near Ipswich, Suffolk. He is with me now, on his last visit to this country; and is very glad that it happens to be in my power to ascertain whether this poor queen is in Florence, wishing much to remit the money.

Your letter reached Mrs. Hodson; so that you see there is one waiter whose conscience is proof against a sixpenny temptation. Methinks he deserves a place in the Legion of Honour. A letter of mine, at Geneva, was destroyed for the sake of a smaller sum.

I shall be better employed, both for others and myself, upon the history of other times, than of our own. When we treat of our own times, there is always danger of being in some degree influenced by personal feelings, and thus unconsciously becoming unjust. In

your Conversations the difference between those which relate to elder or to present times is like that between the atmosphere on a fine summer's day on the top of one of these mountains, and in the crowded streets of London. When you are consubstantiating yourself, Lucullus, Cicero, or Isaac Casaubon, every thought and feeling are such as you are the better for having entertained and uttered; and others are the better and the happier for partaking them. I should like dearly to see such a history of Rome, as you and you only could write from the commencement of Augustus's reign to the end of the Antonines. With some dreadful exceptions, and moreover, a constant and necessary tendency to deteriorate in everything, I suppose this to have been the happiest age of what may be called the European world. Neither you nor I should be ambitious of being the contemporaries of Fronto, but how we should have loved such an emperor as Marcus Antoninus!

Owen's political opinions have begun to germinate, and will very speedily produce fruit after their kind, which will be of two sorts. Some of the labouring classes have gone to work in the right way. Under the direction of some clear-headed promoter of the scheme (one of their own class), a certain number of workingmen at Brighton, by clubbing sixpence a week each, which they vested, not in a benefit society, or savingbank, but, as soon as it amounted to a sufficient sum, in a little grocer's shop, carried it on by one of their members, for the benefit of the whole. Of course all the members purchased their goods there. The profits and the continued subscription were next invested in a mackerel boat; then in a garden of 28 acres: thus far the experiment had gone when I obtained my account of it. Their intention is to go on till every member of this society is employed in the service of the whole, and then they consider their society to be complete. They publish a weekly paper, explaining their principles and progress, at one penny each; and of this paper 12,000 copies are sold. Already seventy

such societies have been formed. One at Leicester has set up a manufactory of stockings, from which all the other societies buy. Thus far all is well; and the immediate advantage of such unions to the persons engaged in them so great, manifest, and undeniable, that it is no wonder they would multiply as fast as they are multiplying. But in another of their papers, which is published by a co-operation society at Birmingham, they declare that their vesters aim at nothing short of a community in land and in goods. The men who write these papers are plain, practicable, strong-headed men. Very soon such fellows as Cobbett will take up the principle, and use it as an engine of mischief,—the most tremendous that has ever yet been brought to bear upon society.

Momentous as this is, it has not yet engaged the attention of a single public writer. There will be a paper upon it in the next *Q. R.* by my friend Dr. Gooch, who, happening to be at Brighton, got acquainted with the facts; and who has looked hitherto at the bright side of the question. I agree with him in all his hopes and feelings; and when next we communicate, I doubt not but he will partake in my darker apprehensions. Yet if we can keep this principle within its proper bounds, so as to secure the well-being of the whole lower order, without pulling down the higher orders, leave full scope for that desire of bettering our own condition, which is the mainspring of improvement in everything, and at the same time prevent that desire from making way to its own gratification by injuring or defrauding others;—if this could be done, I should then indeed gladly sing my *Nunc dimittis!* At present the ship is driving fast toward the breakers, and it behoves those who know their duty, to cast about in what manner they may best construct rafts from the wreck (they who may survive), when they shall have stood by it to the last. God bless you. R. S.

219. To Henry Taylor

Oct. 8, 1829.

My dear H. T.,—I have been jumping for joy: Verbeyst has kept his word; the bill of lading is in Longman's hands, and by the time this reaches you I hope the vessel, with the books on board, may be in the river, and by this day month they will probably be here. Then shall I be happier than if his Majesty King George the Fourth were to give orders that I should be clothed in purple, and sleep upon gold, and have a chain about my neck, and sit next him because of my wisdom, and be called his cousin.

Long live Verbeyst! the best, though not the most expeditious, of booksellers; and may I, who am the most patient of customers, live long to deal with him. And may you and I live to go to the Low Countries again, that I may make Brussels in the way, and buy more of his books, and drink again of his Rhenish wine and of his strong beer, better than which Jacob von Artevelde never had at his own table, of his own brewing; not even when he entertained King Edward and Queen Philippa at the christening. Would he have had such a son as Philip if he had been a water-drinker, or ever put swipes to his lips? God bless you!

R. S.

220. To ——— ———

Oct. 1829.

My dear Sir,—I have not seen Landor's second edition, though Colburn was desired to send it me. Your judgement of the book is quite in conformity with mine, if (as I suppose) you except a few dialogues from the general censure, one or two being (to my feeling) nearly perfect. What you have heard me say of his temper is the best and only explanation of his faults. Never did man represent himself in his writings so much less generous, less just, less compassionate, less noble in all respects than he really is. I certainly never knew any one of brighter genius, or of kinder heart.

I am pleased, also, to find you expressing an opinion respecting Milton and Wordsworth which I have never hesitated to deliver as my own when I was not likely to do harm. A greater poet than Wordsworth there never has been, nor ever will be. I could point out some of his pieces which seem to me good for nothing, and not a few faulty passages, but I know of no poet in any language who has written so much that is good.

Now, ——, I want you, and *pray you* to read Berkeley's *Minute Philosopher*; I want you to learn that the religious belief which Wordsworth and I hold, and which—I am sure you know in my case, and will not doubt in his—no earthly considerations would make us profess if we did not hold it, is as reasonable as it is desirable; is in its historical grounds as demonstrable as anything can be which rests upon human evidence; and is, in its life and spirit, the only divine philosophy, the perfection of wisdom; in which, and in which alone, the understanding and the heart can rest.

God bless you! R. S.

221. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, December 18, 1829.

Dear Friend,—I must not let your letter remain a single post unanswered. If you go before me to that world in which I trust we shall meet, not to be separated, I will take charge of your papers, and make it my first business to publish in a fitting manner the whole of your writings, to be a lasting monument of your worth, and of my affection. As for my letters, I will deposit them with yours (for I have preserved every line that I ever received from you). There is nothing in them which might not be seen by men and angels, and though written, as their utter carelessness and unreserve may show, without the slightest reference to any other eyes than those to which they were addressed, I shall not be unwilling to think that when time has consecrated both our memories (which it will do) this correspondence may see the light. Our earthly life, dear Caroline, lasts

longer than in the hearts of those we love ; it endures in the hearts of those whom we have never known, and who learn to love us after our work on earth is done. They who live on earth, in their good works, continue to make friends there as long as their works survive ; and it may be one of the pleasures of another state to meet those friends when they seek us in heaven. I often feel that this will and must be so, when on reading a good old book my heart yearns towards the author.

Henry Taylor undertakes the disposal of my papers if he survives me—which I sometimes fear he may not : not calculating, God knows, upon any likelihood of longevity in myself, nor desiring it, except for the sake of those who would feel my loss, but because he is the son of a consumptive mother, and was born but a little while before her death. Among those who are much my juniors he is the only man whom I have taken to my heart.

But now let us put away posthumous considerations, and think of what we may yet do for ourselves. I knew you would delight in Stewart's book, and so you will in Ellis's, and in his *Polynesian Researches*. They are all most interesting books, and you will find in them subjects which I hope will tempt you to produce something for our projected volumes. Or if you will think again of that Irish story, I will send you what I have thought as to the manner of treating it, and the matters of times, places, and circumstances, for dressing it up.

Longman has applied to me for a volume of our naval history, given in the form of biography, for which he offers the same price as he pays to Scott and Mackintosh, being £750 for the volume. The volume is small, but holds much ; and the prescribed extent is from 350 to 400 pages. But this is large pay—about the rate of my *Quarterly Review* payment, and with the advantage of one straightforward subject ; and as the task is neither difficult nor unpleasant, I have undertaken it, but not to make it my employment till midsummer next, if I am living and well. At present I am on a life of John Bunyan ; on Maw's voyage down the

Orellana, for the *Quarterly Review*; and on the *Peninsular War*—working tooth and nail. The more quietly and steadily I am employed, always the more cheerful I am: such exercise of the mind seems as necessary for my perfect health and spirits as exercise of body is for others. But I do not neglect the body; and as the sun shines just now, which he is little in the habit of doing, I shall make up my dispatches (put my clogs to the fire meantime), and, in vulgar English, fetch a walk.

Now remember that I love your letters, and that it will be a great pleasure to hear that you continue to amend. Dear Caroline, God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

222. To MRS. HUGHES

Keswick, June 8, 1830.

MY DEAR MRS. HUGHES,—Your Dean, the Bishop, is one of a committee of thirteen, who are to nominate 100 new members for the Athenaeum Club. I have been asked by one for whom I have no little liking and respect, to use my influence in getting him upon that list; and if you should be in town, you will perhaps do me the kindness of mentioning him to the Bishop. His name is Quillinan; he has been in the army; Irish by family, Portuguese by birth (i. e. an Irish-Englishman born in Portugal), Roman Catholic by religion, an elegant poet, and a very agreeable and thoroughly amiable man. He married a daughter of Sir Egerton Brydges, and was for several years Wordsworth's nearest neighbour, till he lost her by the dreadful circumstance of her clothes catching fire. All who know him are very much attached to him.

I have no longer to reproach myself on the score of John Jones's verses. The delay has now been for several weeks with the printers.

The compliments with which I am sometimes favoured by the post are not always fit to be shown, but I have received a letter to-day, which I am not called upon

by modesty to conceal, and I think an accurate copy of it may amuse you. It is directed 'Rev. Robert Southey, D.D. London', and is post-marked 'Leeds'.

SIR,

I seen a letter in the 'Congregatyal Magisene' from you. I should have a thought a d d in the nintheth Sentery would a bean a shamd of it. thear you say in page 240 for May last, that the Desenters are half Englishman for what? becouse they donte conform to your popish Church, for so I must call it. you say we onley own one part of you Church, I confess I do not own aney of it. and yet we aer as lyal subjects to the King and country as you aer, and our prayers aer as harty and as furvent as ever you Church can be, and that George the fourth well knoos, and much more exceptable to God then you foramal ones aer, wich come from such cold harts as yous. We as Desenters have no call to be a shamd for desenting from your corup Church, as I am shore half of it is popury. I am happy I left it by my own chice, seeing the crupsion thear is in it, and you cold farmal clarigy as no nothing of the Gospil, altho profes to say so when ordained, one half of them poor drunkerds. So I would have you keep to its forms and let disenters alone, as we are all ways able to answer for ourselves against such kings tools as Southey.

You aer call a poet to is Magestey. I am a shamd of such poets. I wish the king was—

a desenter.

To Robert Southey, D.D.

Do you know that the dissenting ministers in the country 'generally make it known every month from the pulpit that there is a magazine to be had of Mr. So-and-So, or to be had in the vestry'? This I learn from the last *Evangelical Magazine*, where the practice is praised and recommended to all their pastors.

Both Church and State seem at this time to be in a hopeful condition. The heir expectant chooses I hear to be called Harry the Ninth, which I suppose is meant

to denote his intention of effecting a further reformation. That some serious measures with regard to the Church property were intended by the Duke of Wellington, if he had not greatly to his astonishment found himself so miserably weak, I do not doubt; and if Lord Holland is to be the new king's minister, or his secret adviser, we know what the Church has to expect. It will not fare better if Parliamentary Reform be carried; and that question will either be carried by storm, or conceded by cowardice, in the course of the next Parliament, unless the influential Whigs see their danger in time. In this country I have reason to think that some of them are heartily frightened at the progress of their own doctrines.

Meantime I am pursuing my own affairs as the people did in the time of Noah: not that I am regardless of the signs of the times, nor blind to the consequences of that general dissolution with which our fabric of society is threatened. I have taken a new lease of my house; am making improvements in it, getting my books more and more in order, adding continually to them, going on with old projects, forming new ones, and working while I can. The rivalry of the booksellers in these Family Libraries has turned to good account for me.

Cuthbert is going on as well as I could wish him: we go on with his archiepiscopal studies, as if Canterbury and Lambeth were as safe as Skiddaw. His sisters and his mother are in tolerable health. I see the progress of time in all around me, and feel it in myself; but I am well, thank God, always employed, and always cheerful.

Remember us to Dr. Hughes, and believe me always, —Yours with sincere regard, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

223. To HENRY TAYLOR

Keswick, July 10, 1830.

MY DEAR HENRY TAYLOR,—I dare say it will generally be felt that Mrs. Heber's book does not support the pretensions which its title, and still more

its appearance, seems to hold forth. The materials would have appeared to more advantage in a different arrangement.

There is certainly an air of book-making about the publication; which is not lessened by the funebrial verses that it contains. Mine might have accompanied the portrait, in which case they would have seemed to be appropriately introduced; in fact, they were composed with that design. But this book ought not to detract from his reputation, the estimate of which must be taken from those things which he prepared for the press, and from his exertions in India. He was a man of great reading, and in his *Bampton Lectures* has treated a most important part of the Christian faith with great learning and ability. His other published sermons are such, that I am not surprised my brother Henry should think him the most impressive preacher he ever heard.

As a poet he could not have supported the reputation which his *Palestine* obtained; for it was greatly above its deserts, and the character of the poem, moreover, was not hopeful; it was too nicely fitted to the taste of the age. Poetry should have its lights and shades, like painting; like music, its sink and swell, its relief and its repose. So far as the piece was intended for success in a competition for a prize, and for effect in public recitation, it was certainly judiciously done to make every line tell upon the ear. But to all such poetry the motto under one of Quarles's Emblems may be applied, '*tinnit, inane est.*'

He had a hurried, nervous manner in private society, which covered much more ardour and feeling than you would have supposed him to possess. This I believe entirely disappeared when he was performing his functions; at which time, I have been assured, he seemed totally regardless of everything but the duty wherein he was engaged.

Few persons took so much interest in my writings, which may partly have arisen from the almost entire coincidence in our opinions and ways of thinking upon

all momentous subjects; the Catholic question alone excepted. Mrs. Heber told me that I had had no little influence in directing his thoughts and desires towards India: and I have no doubt that some lines in *Joan of Arc* set him upon the scheme of his poem on the death of King Arthur. My personal acquaintance with him was but little; but we knew a great deal of each other through Charles Wynn.

I *am* fond of irregular rhymeless lyrics, a measure wherein I have had few to approve and still fewer to imitate me. The proof of the poetry, however, is not like that of the pudding, in the taste of those who partake it. *Thalaba* might very probably have been popular had it been in rhyme. None of my lyrical pieces could have been so; and methinks it makes little difference whether there be three or four to admire them, or five or six.

There are friendships of *chance* and friendships of *choice*; and it was of the former which I meant to speak; they are the more numerous, and probably the more lasting, because, generally beginning earlier, they have time to strike root in us, and partake of the nature of a habit, as the latter may be said to do, in some degree, of a passion. For the same reason you are not so likely to be deceived in them. One whom you have known from early boyhood may disappoint your hopes and expectations; but you will seldom be deceived in your moral estimate of him; if he was ingenuous and kind-hearted he will continue so through life. A good apple-tree may be blighted, or cankered in its growth, but it will never produce crabs.

Ministers will delay the meeting of Parliament as long as they can; just as schoolboys would prolong their holidays if they could. But they may be flattered or frightened into anything, good, bad, or indifferent: no persons who ever filled that station before have been politically so weak, and most pitiably conscious they are of their weakness. A promise to convoke it without delay may probably be extorted from them. 'Gentlemen' have other business than that of the nation to

attend to in the month of September; and I do not expect them to meet till they have had a campaign against the pheasants as well as the partridges. So I look to be in town somewhere in October.

God bless you! R. S.

224. To the Rev. Neville White

Keswick, March 21, 1831.

My dear Neville,—You know, my dear Neville, that I have endeavoured always to impress upon the public the necessity of educating the people. If that education is either so conducted, or left so imperfect as in many cases to do harm rather than good, the fault is not in the principle, but in the mismanagement of it. The great evil which at present it produces is that of making young persons discontented with the stations which they were intended to fill; and thus producing more claimants for the stations one degree higher than can be provided for in that class. Whenever the education which such persons receive shall become universal, this mischief must necessarily cease. It produced nothing but good in Scotland, because it was universal there.

A more difficult question is, how to render the religious instruction which children receive at school of more effect. And where parents neglect, as they so very generally do in that station of life, this duty, I do not see how this is to be done by schools and teachers. We want a reformation of manners to effect that without which manners, alas! cannot be reformed. This is evident, that boys and girls are taken from school precisely at that age when they become capable of, in some degree, understanding and feeling what till then they have only learnt by rote. Then it is that the aid of catechists is wanting. In a small parish the clergyman can do much; in large ones I do not wonder that they are deterred from attempting what with their utmost exertions they could not possibly accomplish.

I am perfectly satisfied that no children ought to

be left without education; so much as to enable them to read, write, cypher, and understand their moral and religious duties. But about infant schools I do not see my way so clearly; and am not sure whether some harm is not done, both to parent and child, by taking so much off the parent's hands. No doubt it is a choice between evils. Of this I am sure, that half the crimes which disgrace this nation are brought on by *street education*, which goes on in villages as well as in towns. So far as infant schools tend to prevent this, they are greatly beneficial.

You ask me about Magdalen institutions. There is scarcely any form of misery that can have so strong a claim upon compassion as that which these are intended to alleviate. Often as the intention may be disappointed, one case in which it succeeds may compensate for fifty disappointments. And these poor creatures are not so generally, I might say so uniformly, to be distrusted as prison converts. In prisons, I believe, the common effect is, that the cleverest criminals add hypocrisy to their other sins.

Look again at what I have said concerning the observance of Sunday, and you will perceive that I have argued against Dymond's liberal notions about the day, and also against, not a religious, but a puritanical, observance of it; for that, I am sure, tends to promote irreligion. Of the two extremes I would choose rather the popish than the puritanical Sabbath. Let us keep the mean.

James Stanger is expected here next week, but for a short time only. He is a very valuable man, and I have a sincere respect for him, though very far from being as good a neighbour as he might like to find me, and, were he less considerate than he is, might expect me to be. But I have no time for neighbourly intercourse.

No room is left for politics. My hope is that the Ministers will not think it expedient to resign till war begins; for something would seem wanting in political justice, if it were not to be begun under their adminis-

tration. God forgive them for the mischief they are doing by their portentous budget of reform; and for calling in, as they have done, and are doing, the aid of the villainous press, in order to carry it by intimidation. Passages in the ——, which even the Editor would not dare to write, are said to have been supplied to him for this purpose.

Our kind remembrances to your fireside.

God bless you, my dear Neville!—Yours affectionately, R. Southey.

225. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, July 11, 1831.

My visit to Cheltenham was as useless as I had anticipated, and as melancholy in all respects as it could be; but I was not exhibited there, and you may be sure that I did not exhibit myself. I went, by my own desire, to see the Springs, and two of the Allen family went with us; your friend was not one, but she called on the following day with her father, and they both seemed likeable persons. As to alarming them: I thought it quite fitting, in political cases (whatever it may be in medical ones), that people should be made to understand the nature and extent of their danger: and so far, it may be very likely that I alarmed some of the few persons with whom I had any conversation at Cheltenham; but, to them, as to you, I spoke with a confidence that Providence will bring us through these dangers, if we do not basely betray ourselves.

It was impossible for me to accept the trusteeship. Poor Doctor Bell's first concern is how to dispose of all his money in promoting his own system of education; and his second, that as much of it may go to Scotland for this purpose as can be disposed of there. After giving away £120,000, Three per cents. in trust, he had yet to direct the disposal of it; and on my arrival I found that he had resolved upon dividing it into twelve shares, six of which were appropriated to St. Andrew's, and four more for schools at Edinburgh,

Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Inverness, which four may be considered as so much money thrown away. I was consulted about the other two: after observing that, as this money had been derived wholly from the Church of England, some portion of it ought to return thither, I proposed that one-twelfth should go to the augmentation of poor livings, and the other (which I knew was the only means of obtaining any favour for such advice) to founding one of his own schools in every parish so augmented. By vesting this sum in the hands of trustees, it might have been so managed that every £200 would have called forth as much more from Queen Anne's Bounty, so that forty poor livings might have been benefited to the extent of £400 each, that is, from £12 to £20 a year, according as the money could be with more or less advantage invested. Well, he was delighted with this; and came into it with so much earnestness that I was quite affected at the thought of having been almost the accidental means of bringing about so much good. But the next day he changed his mind—schools, schools must have all. The newspaper brought an account that there was to be a new Royal Naval Asylum; he puts this paper into my hand at our first meeting in the morning, and writes on his slate 'this is a God-send'. Accordingly one-twelfth went there, and there remains one more, and the eventual residue of his property, which, I suppose, is still considerable, to be disposed of. I mentioned the Clergy Orphans' Fund, the Society for propagating the Gospel, Bishop Middleton's College at Calcutta, or a like institution to be commenced at Madras; but all must be confined to schools, and the schools, if possible, to Scotland.

I mentioned his relations. He gives his only sister £400 a year for her life, and nothing but the most trifling legacies to any other of his blood. They were not near to him, he said (on his slate, observe, for he has totally lost his speech), they had no claim on him. No claim, I admitted, but a reasonable hope, a reasonable expectation, where there were none nearer, where

there was so much to bestow, and where the law would give it if he died intestate. He wrote 'My discovery is my child'. 'Yes, sir,' I replied, 'it is your child, and you have taken very good care of it; but it is not all your kith and kin.' This availed nothing, and when I expressed a wish that something more than £100 should be left to the person who had been most useful to him in his own way—Mr. Johnson, the master of the Central School—a shake of the head was the reply; all, all was to be devoted to his discovery; he would be (on the slate) 'consistent and consecutive to the last'. A stranger or more melancholy example of some ruling passion, good in itself, becoming evil in its excess, and stifling all other good and generous feelings, can hardly be imagined. The sister, I have no doubt, will endeavour to set the will aside. I endeavoured to turn this to some use, and advised him, instead of leaving her an annuity, to make her residuary legatee, and give her something of which she might dispose to her relations after her death; she would then be satisfied, and thus litigation would be prevented. But to this he would not listen; very, indeed, very indignant at her attempting to set up a plea of insanity against him. I represented to him that groundless as this is (and indeed nothing can be more so) and perfectly untenable, yet something must be allowed to her surprise and disappointment. He had made what all persons must consider a most extraordinary disposal of his property; many would think it unwise, and it was easy for those whose expectations were cut off by it to fancy that *insane* which they believed to be unreasonable. All that I said was taken in good part, and all to no purpose. But I suppose that my journey will not be altogether as unproductive of evil as it has been of good; it will, in all likelihood, take me before some Ecclesiastical Court to be examined as a witness when the will is disputed. Nor will it surprise me if the bequest intended for me, as joint editor of his works, should be expunged in the last edition of his will. Be that as it may, I shall always retain a lively

and affectionate remembrance of him, such as he was when I knew him first, and for many years afterwards—a lover of children, if ever man was, from pure benevolence and kind feeling towards them; and set beyond all men in the pursuit of one great object, and devoting his whole thoughts, his whole life, his whole fortune, to it.

Poor Bowles! I have seen only the first volume of his *Life of Bishop Ken*, and sorry I was that I could not review it without mortifying him, however carefully I might have abstained from noticing the faults of the book. But to have written Ken's life as it ought to be written would, in its effect, have been the most unkind thing I could have done, if done in the form of a review. This withholds me from a very tempting subject, the more tempting because I claim kin with Bishop Ken.

You ask about the Howitts. The Wordsworths left them full of gratitude for their kindness, and full of liking for Mary. But her husband, whom they might otherwise have liked much, though never quite so well, had the Reform fever upon him so strongly as to put the cloven foot of Quakerism offensively forward; not when Mr. Wordsworth was there, for all these people would as soon take a bull by the horns as to show theirs either to Mr. Wordsworth or to me, but to poor Dora, who left the room one day when he had been exulting on the near downfall of the Church, and asserting that any person who was a clergyman of the Establishment must be either a fool or a hypocrite: this to her, when her brother and uncle are clergymen! He apologized to her afterwards, and did not repeat the offence, having been well reproved for it by his wife; but the circumstance shows what these sectarians are when the latent spirit is brought out.

I have been working hard since my return, both at the *Colloquies* and at the *Peninsular War*, making hay while the sun shines—in other words, making good use of the interval between reviewing times. At this season I have seldom less than two hours' walk (including a delicious bath in the Greta) every day; for if I were disposed to stay within, Cuthbert comes up with an

asking countenance, and I do not like to disappoint him. Bertha is come home with a sad debility about her; her ankles swell and disable her for the exercise which she requires. If they had not the happy spirits of youth, these daughters of mine would all be miserable invalids: and of course I cannot but think of the time when that season will be over, and they may, too probably, have less cheerful circumstances about them. Their mother is better than she has been for many years, and for that I am most truly thankful.

There is a story of a Spaniard who was fond of cherries, and whenever he ate them put on spectacles to make them look larger and finer. I do this with all my enjoyments of every kind: make little pleasures into great ones, and put on diminishing glasses when I look at inconveniences. Our dangers are to be looked at in their own just magnitude; there is no trifling with them; but this way of mine adds largely to the comforts, and diminishes in the same degree the annoyances of life. This my children seem to have inherited or learned; and with this true worldly wisdom, and that better wisdom which, prepared as they are, time will surely bring with it, of looking to the next state of existence with a constant and cheerful hope, they will so far be well fitted for whatever may befall them when I am gone. Anastasius Hope has left a posthumous book with his notion of heaven in it—the most preposterous heaven that ever was conceived. We are all, all of us, men, women, and children, good and bad, of all sorts, tempers, characters, and complexions, *all* to make up one great human being, this being the ultimate perfection of the human race! Why I would rather drink ale in Valhalla out of the skull of the Lord Advocate Jeffrey (he being mine enemy), or out of Thomas Babington Macaulay's, if his be the larger cranium and the ale be good. No, Caroline, you and I will not be mixed up with Anastasius Hope, and Solomon and all his wives and concubines, and the whole courts of Louis XIV and Charles II, and all the monks and nuns that ever lived, and all the radicals,

and all the Turks, Jews, Infidels—nay, not even with all deans and chapters (if there were nobody else), and all dissenting ministers, and all bazaar ladies. No, no, no; it would be no heaven for you and I to be mixed up in such a compound, and made bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh. We shall keep our identities there, and all our good feelings, and all our recollections, that either are or can be made instrumental to our happiness, and we shall lose nothing but what it will be ease to part with—sorrows, and frailties, and infirmities. We shall not lose our own very selves, nor each other!

God bless you, dear friend, and bring us both (He will bring us) into that blessed state in His own good time, and fit us for it more and more till that time comes.—*July* 12. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

226. To EDWARD MOXON

Keswick, Dec. 10, 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,—Mr. Forster has sent me the circular address concerning Mr. Leigh Hunt. As your name is affixed to it, I reply rather to you than to him; not in any disrespect to that gentleman, but because I can explain myself with more satisfaction to you than to a stranger. They who are acquainted with me know that I am neither resentful nor intolerant. I bear no ill will towards Mr. Leigh Hunt. I think highly of his powers—none of his friends more highly—and I am sorry for his distressed circumstances; but this address dwells upon his labours as a public writer, his suffering in consequence, his disposition to discover all that is good and hopeful, and his habit of inculcating it. To a paper which advances any claims for Mr. Leigh Hunt upon these grounds I cannot let my name appear. If it be desirable that the peace and order of society should be maintained; if Christian morals are the best security for both, and if Christianity be (as I know it to be) the only sure foundation for individual happiness, and for the general weal, then assuredly during those twenty years of his public life, for which he is commended in

this circular, Mr. Leigh Hunt has not been meritoriously employed, for he has been actively labouring to subvert them all. It would not be difficult for his friends to draw up an address, in which, without compromising any of his opinions, or touching upon them (whatever they may now be), the appeal might be made solely upon the score of his literary merits, placing him thus, as it were, within the sacred territory which ought always to be considered and respected as neutral ground. They who admire him upon all accounts would not be the less willing to subscribe if this prudential course were followed; and it would enable others to do so who, while they admire his genius, and regard his errors with as much compassion as his misfortunes, must, for their own sakes, refuse to sanction any approval, expressed or implied, of what they believe to have been erroneous and mischievous. I shall be glad if this advice be taken, given as it is in goodwill. I wish Mr. Leigh Hunt all the good that he desires for himself, and, it may be feared, much more; for I wish him not only health, prosperity, and deliverance from all temporal cares, but also that God's mercy, acting upon his better mind, may prepare it for that divine philosophy without which no one, however prosperous, can be happy, and with which no one, however afflicted, can be without consolation and hope. Believe me, my dear sir,—Yours very truly, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

227. To the Rev. J. W. Warter

Keswick, June 20, 1832.

My dear Warter,—Oxford or Cambridge are good places of residence for men who, having stored their minds well, want well-stored libraries which may enable them to pursue their researches and bring forth the fruits of them. But the plant which roots itself there will never attain any vigorous growth. The mind must be a very strong and a very active one, which does not stand still while it is engaged in *tutoring*, and both universities now are little more than manufactories

in which men are brought up to a certain point in a certain branch of knowledge; and when they have reached that point, they are kept there.

But, after all, knowledge is not the first thing needful. Provided we can get contentedly through the world, and (be the ways rough or smooth) to heaven at last, the sum of knowledge that we may collect on the way is more infinitely insignificant than I like to acknowledge in my own heart. Indeed, it is not easy for me always to bear sufficiently in mind that the pursuits in which I find constant interest and increasing enjoyment must appear of no interest whatever to the greater part not merely of mankind, but of the educated part even of our own countrymen. I forget this sometimes when I am wishing for others opportunities by which perhaps they would not be disposed to profit.

I wish I could answer Sarmento's question to my own satisfaction. If I could follow my inclinations, a week would not elapse before the *History of Portugal* would be in the press. But this work can only have that time allotted to it which can be won from works of necessity, and that not yet. I hope my affairs are in such a train that next year it will become my chief object in those *subsecive* hours, for which I can find no English word. Once in the press it would go on steadily; for the subject has been two-and-thirty years in my mind. So long is it since I began not merely to collect materials, but to digest them, and for at least two-thirds of the history, I have only to recompose in the process of transcribing what has long been written. I believe no history has ever yet been composed that presents such a continuous interest of one kind or another, as this would do, if I should live to complete it. The chivalrous portion is of the very highest beauty, much of what succeeds has a deep tragic interest; and then comes the gradual destruction of a noble national character brought on by the cancer of Romish superstition.

But I have other letters to write by this post, and therefore must conclude. God bless you! R. S.

228. To the Rev. J. W. Warter

Keswick, July 18, 1832.

My dear Warter,—I have been breakfasting this morning at Mr. Stanger's, to meet Bennett, who went out with Tyerman as Visitor of the Missions in the South Seas, and elsewhere,—a lively communicative man, very zealously engaged in a very good cause. This has kept me later than is convenient for sending you a dispatch by this day's post. But Edith wishes me to give you some account of a great architectural work which Glover has finished under her direction and superintendence. This is nothing less than the erection of a carved chimney-piece in Paul. There was some old carving for the pedestals, for one side-piece, and for the cross-piece; so that which was to be supplied, for which the materials afforded no pattern, was the centre-piece, the two upper corners, the mantelpiece, and a sort of finish below, which gave the appearance of an arch to the upper works. And here, though the works were to be new, you will allow that the materials were sufficiently old, when I tell you that they consisted of oak from the old chapel in Borrodale, which was built 600 or 700 years ago.

Edith designed the corner pieces, a grotesque figure on each, which we took from the engraved title-page to my copy of the *Decretals*. When Glover brought them home, he entered with a joyful exclamation, 'Well, Miss Suthey, I have done my Devils!' He wronged them, however, in giving them that designation: they are only monsters, grotesque and not hideous. For the centre-piece there is a witch blowing her fire, which has a pot boiling on it; and her purveyor, a griffin, is in the act of alighting, with a hare in one of his fore-paws. I do not know where the witch came from; but the griffin and the hare we found in a Bavarian coat of arms.

I must now tell you that the whole is the admiration of all who have seen it, and Glover is so proud of it,

that he says, 'Miss Suthey, I think the next thing you and I must do must be to build Solomon's temple!'

Glover, you must know, has been employed by us some five-and-twenty years, ever since he was a 'prentice-boy. Nature qualified him for a gentleman of the best kind, but fortune made him a poor carpenter: not the best of workmen, except in fancy work, in which he is very clever; comprehending in a moment what you wish him to understand: and so honest and so thoroughly good-humoured, that it is impossible ever to be angry with him.

The *Edda* is arrived in Harley Street, and will arrive here about the time this reaches Copenhagen. I am sorry you are prevented from your journey into Sweden, very sorry, because the opportunity is not likely to be recovered.

God bless you—my next shall be soon,—more I trust at leisure and at length. R. S.

229. To Mrs. Bray, Tavistock

Keswick, Jan. 8, 1833.

My dear Mrs. Bray,—I have your letter of Nov. 15, and returned the packet early in December. It has probably been mislaid owing to Henry Taylor's having been out of town, or some other cause, and I write to make inquiry concerning it. Of late I know that he has been most grievously engaged in business, as you may suppose, when I tell you that the main weight of West Indian affairs rests upon him,—his being the working head and the working hand in this fearful department. And I know also that his facilities of franking have been diminished owing to the death of Hyde Villiers, with whom he was in habits of the greatest intimacy. Several of my packets have been delayed of late owing to this latter cause; but I suppose that yours has slept under some pile of official papers, a mishap by which some of mine have not unfrequently been overlaid. However, I will cause inquiry to be made, and I trust it will be forthcoming.

It gives me great pleasure to hear of your improved health. Too much work must be injurious to any person, and so must too much excitement; some of us are so circumstanced that we cannot always escape the former evil, but the latter is generally a matter of indulgence, and therefore a sin to be eschewed. The best advice I can give you is to be idle whenever you feel disposed to be so, and resolutely to become so whenever you feel very strongly inclined to be otherwise. With such care I trust you may see as many happy new years as I wish you,—happy, let the course of public affairs be what it may, for in the worst times we shall have hope to support, and the consciousness of being right.

In this part of the country the Conservatives have rallied and shown their strength. The other party might have returned one member, they chose to bring forward two, and when the one shrunk from the contest he had provoked, the other was beaten. Bristol and Norwich manifest a similar turn in affairs; and I believe there is no doubt that the rising generation at the Universities, and very many of the young aristocracy, have taken the right bias. Great expectations are formed of young Gladstone, the member for Newark, who is said to be the ablest person that Oxford has sent forth for many years, since Peel or Canning. I have always some fears for such reputations; they sometimes upset the bearer, and they often indicate more dexterity than strength; but I hope he may not disappoint his friends.

On the whole, the elections have gone as ill as might have been feared; they have proved, what indeed needed no proof, that the ten pound qualification was the worst that could have been chosen. I know not whether you have heard what is likely to be the close of ———'s return. He is an uncertificated bankrupt. The qualification, therefore, by which some mischievous booby puts him in nominal possession of an estate actually makes that estate the property of his creditors. If the owner (as usual in such transactions) trusts to

———'s honour, he loses the whole, and if he has taken a bond for him, he comes in only for his dividend. And the qualification being thus disposed of, ———'s election becomes null and void. Altogether this is just as it should be.

We are tolerably well here, thank God, and have hitherto enjoyed a mild and pleasant winter. Indeed, nothing can be more delightful among these mountains, than a mild winter's day. I have been, and still am, more closely employed than is agreeable, upon my *Naval History*: another fortnight, I trust, will bring me to the end of the volume, on which, however, I am so intent that I have not found time to finish my letter concerning Lord Nugent, though it is all but finished. But the conclusion is just that part which I wish to write calmly and in perfect leisure. You will like the temper with which I have treated him. This I must have said to you in the letter which is now buried somewhere with your packet, but soon, I hope, to be brought to light.

You will be much amused, if you have not yet seen them, with Madame d'Arblay's memoirs of her father, and you will marvel how one who wrote so easily and naturally in her youth, should have contracted so forced and ridiculous a style. This, however, does not detract from the value of the book, as a contribution to the literary history of those times. I am afraid the Abbotsford subscription will disappoint Sir Walter's friends, and do no credit to the national character. Who would have dreamt that any attempt should have been made to check it? Yet this has been done by Radical writers, and by Puritanical ones.

I cannot but feel that it would be honourable for England if, as long as Abbotsford stands, the foreigners who go to see it should be told that after Sir Walter's death, the English public purchased that place and secured it for his family as a lasting memorial of their gratitude towards the writer who of all others has contributed most to their entertainment, and whom of all others it most delighted to honour. One said of him,

in a letter to me the other day, that he 'served the world', meaning, however, no more thereby than that he wrote always to the taste of the public, and made that his mark. Lord Byron served the Devil. And Mr. Moore has served the third party in the firm. There is nothing of mine in the last *Quarterly Review*. In the next there will be a short renewal of *Felix Neff's Life*. I am too busy with *Naval History* for any other subject, and yet any other subject almost would be more congenial. Strangely indeed are our lots assigned to us; or I, who delight in things so widely different, should never have been employed in writing upon battles by sea and land. I want to write the Literary History of England from the Commencement of Elizabeth's reign, and, as a separate work, its Domestic History, that is, of the manners in the widest acceptation of the word. My kindest regards to Mr. Bray and Mary. Your Sir Francis is qualified for a seat in the Cabinet. God bless you.—Yours, very truly,

R. S.

230. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, February 6, 1833.

Your poem, dear friend, reached me this morning, and I would have written to you by this day's post, if there had not at the same time arrived another letter upon the same subject, which required an immediate reply, because it consulted me upon the steps to be taken in Parliament against this most hellish of all slaveries. Print your poems by all means. This is a most painful and most true one, and cannot but be felt at this time, when it is of the greatest importance that the nation should be made to feel. You have written like yourself. I could not find any words that would express higher praise.

No task was ever taken up in Parliament under a deeper sense of duty than this will be. The delegates from the manufacturing districts have requested one, whose name I must not mention, but whom you will be at no loss to know, to take Sadler's position and

urge on his Bill. He says to me, 'I shrink from the task in perfect dismay, but still I think that you would advise me to undertake it. I have implored them to try others; they have done so; some fear, some refuse, some are unable by their position as members of manufacturing districts; yet it is a duty towards God and man.' He refers to my *Essays*, which have taken deep hold on his mind, and he concludes with 'God help me'. How you would love him if you saw his letters to me!

I have read of the Slave Trade and of the Inquisition, but nothing ever thrilled my heart like the Evidences which you have been reading. It disturbed my sleep, and I laid the book aside in horror.

It is by this system that the ————s have obtained their enormous wealth and purchased the ———— estates here as an appanage for the second son, that John —— who is to second the address, who in Leeds was returned instead of Sadler, and who, when I advised him to plant alders about the marshy borders of the lake, replied that 'alders were worth only fourpence a foot'. I wish you could have seen Bertha's countenance when he made that reply.

After such an experience I wonder (as far as I can wonder at anything in these times) that none of those cotton and worsted and flax kings have yet hanged themselves; that none of them have been pulled to pieces; that none of their factories have been destroyed; that the very pavement of the streets has not risen and stoned them.

I am glad to see that Sir H. Neale's treatment is stated in the *John Bull*. There is no baseness of which the present Ministers are not capable, and they have just such a king to deal with as they could desire, who thinks himself completely discharged of all moral responsibility, and is verily persuaded that while he does what his Ministers bid him, and they do what the mob bid them, the king can do no wrong!

No possible change can be foreseen that would deliver us from these profligate men. They have brought the country to such a state that no other party

could carry on the government for a week; they themselves can only carry it on during the pleasure of the political unions, unless it be by the support of those whom they hate, and who most righteously execrate them. The Conservatives mean, I know (at least the better part), to stand by them mercifully against the Radicals, but to avoid all coalition with or approximation towards them as they would plague or infamy. This is my feeling. God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

231. To JOHN MAY

Keswick, March 1, 1833.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—If any one had told me that I should ever feel an anxious interest in any promise of the Lord Chancellor Brougham's, it would have seemed a most improbable supposition; and yet I am now solicitous about two of his promises,—that to which you are looking, and that which he made to Henry about the Lunacy Commission. I have known men who make promises without the slightest intention of keeping them, rather with the full intention of never performing them. This is not Brougham's case: in such things he does not look so far forward; and he is a good-natured man, much too good-natured ever to raise hopes, meaning to disappoint them.

This year will not pass away without greater changes than the last. It is already apparent that the reformed Parliament will not work. Government by authority has long been defunct. Government by influence, was put to death by the Reform Bill, and nothing is left but Government by public opinion.

I have gone through the whole evidence concerning the treatment of children in the factories, and nothing so bad was ever brought to light before. The slave trade is mercy to it. We know how the slave trade began and imperceptibly increased, nothing in the beginning being committed that shocked the feelings and was contrary to the spirit of the age. Having

thus grown up, it went on by succession, and of later years has rather been mitigated than made worse. But this white slavery has risen in our own days, and is carried on in the midst of this civilized and Christian nation. Herein it is that our danger consists. The great body of the manufacturing populace, and also of the agricultural, are *miserably* poor; their condition is worse than it *ought* to be. One after another we are destroying all the outworks by which order and with it property and life are defended; and this brutalized populace is ready to break in upon us. The prelude which you witnessed at Bristol was a manifestation of the spirit that exists among them. But in the manufacturing districts, where the wages of the adults are at a starvation rate, and their children are literally worked to death,—murdered by inches,—the competition of the masters being the radical cause of these evils, there is a dreadful reality of oppression, a dreadful sense of injustice, of intolerable misery, of intolerable wrongs, more formidable than any causes which have ever moved a people to insurrection. Once more I will cry aloud and spare not. These are not times to be silent. Lord Ashley has taken up this Factory Question with all his heart, under a deep religious sense of duty. I hear from him frequently. If we are to be saved, it will be, I will not say *by* such men, but for the sake of such men as he is,—men who have the fear of God before their eyes and the love of their fellow-creatures in their hearts.

God bless you, my dear friend! Remember me most kindly to your two daughters; and believe me always yours most affectionately, R. Southey.

232. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Jan. 10, 1834.

My dear Grosvenor,—The books arrived a few days since; this I believe you have already been told. But I have not told you how much amusement Cuthbert afforded us on this occasion. The whole business of

transcribing, receiving, correcting, and returning proof sheets (to say nothing of the original composition), has been so well concealed from him, that whenever he knows the truth it will be difficult for him to conceive how he can possibly have been kept in ignorance. From this ignorance we anticipated much entertainment, and have not been disappointed. When I went down to dinner he told me with great glee, that the book which had come that morning was one of the queerest he had ever seen. He had only looked into it, but he had seen that there was one chapter without a beginning, and another about Aballiboozonorribang (for so he had got the word), which whether it was something to eat, or whether it was the thing in the title-page he could not tell; for in one place it was called the sign of the book, and in another you were told to eat beans if you liked, but to abstain from Aballiboozo.

At tea he was full of the chapter about the warts and the moonshine, and all the philosophers in the dictionary. At supper he was open-mouthed about the sirloin of a king, and the schoolmaster's rump; he would read to me about the lost tribes of Israel; and concluded by wishing he had not seen the book, for he should be troubled by dreaming about it all night.

To-day he says that there is more sense in the second volume, but he does not like it so well as the first. That there is not much in the book about the Doctor; and, indeed, he does not know what it is about, except that it is about everything else; that it was very proper to put &c. in the title-page; that the author, whoever he is, must be a clever man, and he should not wonder if it proved to be Charles Lamb. You may imagine how heartily we have enjoyed all this.

A letter from Wordsworth tells us that the book has just arrived there, and that one of W.'s nephews (a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and a very clever and promising person), had got hold of it, was laughing while he looked over the contents, and had just declared that the man who wrote the book must be mad.

God bless you, my dear Grosvenor! R. S.

233. To Henry Taylor

Keswick, Jan. 16, 1834.

My dear H. T.,—Edith departed yesterday from the house in which she was born. God grant that she may find her new home as happy as this has been to her,—though the cheerfullest days of this have long been past. Her prospects are fair; and, what is of most consequence, she is entrusted to safe hands.

As my household diminishes, there will be room for more books. These I shall probably continue to collect, as long as I can; living in the past, and conversing with the dead,—and The Doctor.

God bless you! R. S.

234. To ———

Keswick, July 12, 1834.

Young Gentlemen,—It has come to the knowledge of the writer that one of your amusements here is to worry cats,—that you buy them from those owners who can be tempted to the sin of selling them for such a purpose, and that you employ boys to steal them for you.

A woman who was asked by her neighbour how she could do so wicked a thing as to sell her cat to you, made answer that she never would have done it, if she could have saved the poor creature; but that if she had not sold it, it would have been stolen by your agents, and therefore she might as well have the half-crown herself.

Neither her poverty nor her will consented; yet she was made to partake in your wickedness because she could not prevent it. She gave up to your barbarity a domestic animal—a fireside companion, with which her children had played, and which she herself had fondled on her lap. You tempted her, and she took the price of its blood.

Are you incapable, young gentlemen, of understanding the injury you have done to this woman in

her own conscience, and in the estimation of her neighbours ?

Be this as it may, you cannot have been so ill taught as not to know that you are setting an evil example in a place to which you have come for the ostensible object of pursuing your studies in a beautiful country ; that your sport is as blackguard as it is brutal ; that cruelty is a crime by the laws of God, and theft by the laws also of man ; that in employing boys to steal for you, and thus training them up in the way they should not go, you are doing the devil's work ; that they commit a punishable offence when serving you in this way, and that you commit one in so employing them.

You are hereby warned to give up these practices. If you persist in them, this letter will be sent to all the provincial newspapers.

235. To Allan Cunningham

Keswick, Sept. 1, 1834.

My dear Allan,—Mr. Major will know by the return of his newspaper, a post before this reaches you, that his parcel has been received. I am much obliged both to him and to you for its contents, and would not only willingly, but gladly, do what you desire, if there were not two valid obstacles in the way.

My modesty might perhaps be prevailed on with regard to the first ; yet, in honest truth, I cannot but feel that in writing upon works of art I should be trespassing upon ground on which I have no right to set foot ; and that however I might contrive, by beating about the subject, to conceal my own ignorance from most readers, the consciousness of that ignorance would press upon me while I was writing. I am not afraid of attempting anything which can be accomplished by diligence and research, nor of entering upon points where an intuitive perception of right and wrong may be trusted as the surest guide. But no man who has not studied this branch of art should presume to write upon it.

The other objection there is no setting aside. My connexion with the *Quarterly Review* is, most probably, at an end.

This I should gladly have said of your 'Cabinet Gallery',—and will say of it when I can find opportunity in some 'Colloquy' or elsewhere,—that your part of it is as it should be, that you have written knowingly, pleasantly, candidly, and kindly; in a word, that you have written like yourself.

Seasons of misgiving, my dear Allan, come upon all of us, those only excepted who have no real deserts on which to rest at last. Who is there that does not feel how far his best works have fallen short of his own hopes and aspirations, and that he has written many things which he himself would be willing to forget? Time, however, renders justice to us in many things and in none more than this, that by our better works alone we are known at last. The rubbish may and will be collected; even a respectable editor must collect it, because, if he does not, some of the scavengers of literature will, to the disparagement of his more conscientious labours; but it goes for nothing in the estimate which posterity makes of us; that will be made from what we have done best, not upon an average or balance of the whole.

Your *British Painters* will live as long as any records of British art remain. It is the best book of its kind that has ever fallen in my way. And, independent of its other merits, it is written in a purer English style than any of your countrymen, except perhaps Hume, has hitherto attained. I am sorry that Hogg has had anything to do with a rival edition of Burns;—for his own sake he should not have attempted to do better what you have done so well.

You may well be proud of your sons. Pray remember me to them when you write, and tell them that I rejoice in their success.

I expect to be in town early in October; my stay will be only a week, on my way to the West of England; and on the way back in November I shall halt for

another week. You will see me in all likelihood the day after my arrival.

Present my remembrances to Mrs. Cunningham, and believe me always, my dear Allan,—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

PS. Sir G. Beaumont had a cutting in paper, by your friend Wilkie, which, when the candle was properly disposed, made an admirable copy of Rembrandt's 'Jew Merchant' upon the wall.

236. To GROSVENOR C. BEDFORD

York, Thursday night, Oct. 2, 1834.

MY DEAR GROSVENOR,—After what Henry Taylor has imparted to you, you will not be surprised at learning that I have been parted from my wife by something worse than death. Forty years has she been the life of my life; and I have left her this day in a lunatic asylum.

God, who has visited me with this affliction, has given me strength to bear it, and will, *I know*, support me to the end—whatever that may be.

Our faithful Betty is left with her. All that can be done by the kindest treatment, and the greatest skill, we are sure of at the Retreat. I do not expect more than that she may be brought into a state which will render her perfectly manageable at home. More is certainly possible, but not to be expected, and scarcely to be hoped.

To-morrow I return to my poor children. There is this great comfort,—that the disease is not hereditary, her family having within all memory been entirely free from it.

I have much to be thankful for under this visitation. For the first time in my life I am so far beforehand with the world, that my means are provided for the whole of next year; and that I can meet this additional expenditure, considerable in itself, without any difficulty. As I can do this, it is not worth a thought;

but it must have cost me much anxiety, had my affairs been in their former state.

Another thing for which I am thankful is, that the stroke did not fall upon me when the printers were expecting the close of my naval volume; or the *Memoir of Dr. Watts*. To interrupt a periodical publication is a grievous loss to the publishers, or, at least, a very serious inconvenience.

Some old author says, 'Remember, under any affliction, that Time is short; and that though your Cross may be heavy, you have not far to bear it.'

I have often thought of those striking words.

God bless you, my dear Grosvenor! My love to Miss Page; she, I know, will feel for us, and will pray for us. . . . . R. S.

237. To Henry Taylor

York, Oct. 2, 1834.

My dear H. T.,—Yesterday I deposited my dear wife in the Retreat for Lunatics, near this city, and to-day I visited her there. To-morrow I return home, to enter upon a new course of life.

Recovery is possible; but I do not attempt to deceive myself by thinking that it is likely. It is very probable that she may be brought into a state which will no longer require restraint. In that case, I shall engage a proper attendant from this place, bring her home, appropriate two rooms to her use, and watch over her to give her all the comforts of which she may be capable, till death do us part.

The call upon me for exertion has been such, that, by God's help, I have hitherto felt no weakness.

That this is a far greater calamity than death would have been, I well know. But I perceive that it can be better borne at first, because there is a possibility of restoration, and, however feeble, a hope. Therefore that collapse is not to be apprehended which always ensues when the effort which the circumstances of a mortal sickness, and death, and burial, call forth in the survivor, is at an end.

Mine is a strong heart. I will not say that the last week has been the most trying of my life; but I will say, that the heart which could bear it can bear anything.

It is remarkable that the very last thing I wrote before this affliction burst upon me in its full force was upon Resignation, little foreseeing, God knows, how soon and how severely my own principles were to be put to the proof. The occasion was this:—Mrs. Hughes thought it would gratify me to peruse a letter which she had just received from one of her friends,—a clergyman who had recently suffered some severe domestic affliction. He said that his greatest consolation had been derived from a letter of mine, which she had allowed him to transcribe some years ago, and which he verily believed had at that time saved his heart from breaking. The letter must have been written upon my dear Isabel's death. I have no recollection of it; but that must have been the subject, because Mrs. Hughes and her husband had both been exceedingly struck with her, and declared,—when such a declaration could without unfitness be made,—that she was the most radiant creature they had ever beheld.

This made me reflect upon the difference between religious resignation and that which is generally mistaken for it, and, for immediate purpose, in no slight degree supplies its place. You will see what I was thus led to write, in its proper place.

Davies came with me here, and has been of great use. God bless you, my dear H. T.! R. S.

238. To H. Taylor

Keswick, Oct. 6, 1834.

My dear H. T.,—Your letter did not surprise me, though it would from almost any one else. Thank you most heartily for your offer. But at present it is better that I should be alone, and that the girls should be left to themselves with Miss Hutchinson. For me this is best, because nothing is so painful as the reaction of

your own thoughts after you have been for awhile drawn away from them, if this be attempted too soon. When I can enjoy your company, I shall be most thankful for it; and as you know I shall not give myself to melancholy, you need not apprehend any ill consequences from my being alone.

The worst of my business has been got through. I had Cuthbert at his lessons this morning; to-day will clear off the remaining and less important letters, and to-morrow I hope to resume my work; not, however, forcing myself to it, but following the course which my own instinct will point out.

Miss Fenwick will like to see the last passage which I wrote before this calamity burst upon me, and certainly with no *pro*spective feelings. It will be safe with her if you tell her from whence it is extracted. God bless you! R. S.

'He had looked for consolation where, when sincerely sought, it is always to be found, and he had experienced that religion effects in a true believer all that philosophy professes, and more than all that mere philosophy can perform. The wounds which stoicism cauterizes, Christianity heals.

'There is a resignation with which, it may be feared, most of us deceive ourselves. To bear what must be borne, and submit to what cannot be resisted, is no more than what the unregenerate heart is taught by the instinct of animal nature. But to acquiesce in the afflictive dispensations of Providence,—to make one's own will conform in all things to that of our heavenly Father,—to say to Him, in the sincerity of faith, when we drink of the bitter cup, 'Thy will be done,'—to bless the name of the Lord as much from the heart when He takes away as when He gives, and with a depth of feeling of which, perhaps, none but the afflicted heart is capable; this is the resignation which religion teaches, this the sacrifice which it requires. This sacrifice L. had made, and he felt that it was accepted.'

239. To the Reverend James White

Keswick, Dec. 3, 1834.

My dear James,—Do not think me unfriendly for not having written to you since the affliction came upon me, which has shaken the roots of my domestic happiness. Ill tidings find their way soon enough everywhere, and I have lived in hope that there might be better to communicate.

My last accounts (though mournful enough, God knows) were the most favourable that we have yet received. This was at the expiration of eight weeks; but upon what time, or probability, or extent of recovery, I am as yet altogether unable to count. But there is some improvement. And though it may be imprudent as well as premature to be forming plans, yet it is difficult not to form them. In the event of my poor wife's recovering so far as to render constant medical superintendence no longer necessary and to make moral means of more importance, I shall be summoned to York. This, I believe, may be deemed likely; and it may possibly be found advisable for me to take lodgings there, and send for Cuthbert and his two sisters. In the happiest issue we shall proceed altogether to Tarring. Warter's parsonage is large enough to hold us, and there we shall remain eight or ten months. Meantime Mrs. Lovell would keep house here, and I shall send for her two sisters from the Isle of Man to keep her company.

In the worst issue (which God in his mercy avert!), I shall send the younger part of my family to the south, and return myself here with my poor wife. This can only be if there should be no hope left; as long as there is any, to bring her here would be the most injudicious step that could be taken.

You will perceive by this how little I can see before me, and how unsettled I must feel as to everything that regards the future; but that I hope for the best, while I endeavour to prepare myself for the worst.

you know me well enough to believe. God has mercifully supported me thus long; and when I was called upon for exertion, strength was not wanting. When that necessity ceased, it was not to be expected that I should feel the same strength; in truth, I am severely shaken; but, when a word of hope comes, it counteracts the mischief of a night's unrest;—sleeplessness I do not call it, the old word better describes that uneasy state in which wakeful hours are succeeded by broken slumbers and dreams with which realities are blended.

I am especially thankful to Providence for having at this time, when my expenses are so greatly increased, relieved me from all anxiety on this score. For the first time in my life I am provided with means for twelve months' expenditure beforehand; this is wholly owing to the *Lives of the Admirals*, the most gainful work upon which I ever was employed. And in addition to this, Mr. Telford most kindly and most unexpectedly has left me £500, with a share of his residuary property, which I am told will make it amount in all to about £850. This is truly a Godsend, and I am most grateful for it. It gives me the comfortable knowledge, that if it should please God soon to take me from this world, my family would have resources fully sufficient for their support till such time as their affairs could be put in order and the proceeds of my books, remains, &c., be rendered available. I have never been anxious overmuch, nor taken more thought for the morrow than it is the duty of every one to take who has to earn his livelihood; but to be thus provided for at this time I feel as an especial blessing.

You may be assured that I neglect no means of keeping both mind and body in health, as far as that can be effected by self-management. I walk every day in all weathers, and carry on my employments as usual, the *Admirals* being my first business at present, and the *Life of Cowper* the second; this last will be of sufficient extent to comprise a brief history of our literature during his time. I am daily making notes with this view. You may suppose what an incon-

venience it will be for me to be called away from my books with such a work in hand; their want, however, by some means or other, I shall be able to supply; and certainly, I never wished so earnestly to return to this home (dearly as I have always loved it), as I now desire to be called away with the prospect of eight, ten, or twelve months' absence.

I am glad to hear from Neville of your sister Catherine's intended marriage, and should be most truly glad to hear that you were likely to be removed from a laborious cure under a thankless Diocesan. That time I hope and trust will come.

With kindest regards from this diminished circle, believe me always,—My dear James, Yours affectionately, R. S.

PS. Remember me to Mr. Swain, when you have an opportunity.

240. To Edward Moxon

Keswick, Dec. 31, 1834.

Dear Sir,—Your letter has given me a shock, and with it much cause for melancholy recollections. My acquaintance with poor Lamb was of forty years' standing. I do not know that his removal to another state of existence ought to be regretted for his own sake. His prospect had always been mournful, and every year darkened it. Forlorn as his poor sister will feel herself, when she is capable of feeling, it is better that she should be the survivor. Her happiness, such as it was, depended less upon him than his upon her, and in her sorrow she will habitually seek for consolation where it can alone be found.

I am much obliged to you for the books, and should have thanked you for them without delay, if I had not supposed that you were in Yorkshire.

Lamb's letters will form a most delightful collection, when the time comes for publishing them; and when his sad story may be told there is no writer whose works

will be perused with deeper sympathy. Never was there a kinder, a more generous, or a more feeling heart than his.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

241. SIR ROBERT PEEL TO R. SOUTHEY

Whitehall Gardens, Feb. 1, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have offered a recommendation to the King (the first of the kind which I have offered), which, although it concerns you personally, concerns also high public interests, so important as to dispense with the necessity on my part of that previous reference to individual feelings and wishes, which, in an ordinary case, I should have been bound to make. I have advised the King to adorn the distinction of baronetage with a name the most eminent in literature, and which has claims to respect and honour which literature alone can never confer.

The King has most cordially approved of my proposal to his Majesty; and I do hope that, however indifferent you may be personally to a compliment of this kind, however trifling it is when compared with the real titles to fame which you have established;—I do hope that you will permit a mark of royal favour to be conferred in your person upon the illustrious community of which you are the head.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with the sincerest esteem,—Most faithfully yours, ROBERT PEEL.

This was accompanied with another letter marked *private*.

242. SIR ROBERT PEEL TO R. SOUTHEY

Whitehall, Feb. 1, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am sure, when there can be no doubt as to the purity of the motive and intention, there can be no reason for seeking indirect channels of communication in preference to direct ones. Will you tell me, without reserve, whether the possession

of power puts within my reach the means of doing anything which can be serviceable or acceptable to you; and whether you will allow me to find some compensation for the many heavy sacrifices which office imposes upon me in the opportunity of marking my gratitude, as a public man, for the eminent services you have rendered, not only to literature, but to the higher interests of virtue and religion?

I write hastily, and perhaps abruptly, but I write to one to whom I feel it would be almost unbecoming to address elaborate and ceremonious expressions, and who will prefer to receive the declaration of friendly intentions in the simplest language.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with true respect,—Most faithfully yours, ROBERT PEEL.

PS.—I believe your daughter is married to a clergyman of great worth, and, perhaps, I cannot more effectually promote the object of this letter than by attempting to improve his professional situation. You cannot gratify me more than by writing to me with the same unreserve with which I have written to you.

243. ROBERT SOUTHEY TO SIR ROBERT PEEL

Keswick, Feb. 3, 1835.

DEAR SIR,—No communications have ever surprised me so much as those which I have this day the honour of receiving from you. I may truly say, also, that none have ever gratified me more, though they make me feel how difficult it is to serve any one who is out of the way of fortune. An unreserved statement of my condition will be the fittest and most respectful reply.

I have a pension of £200 conferred upon me through the good offices of my old friend and benefactor, Charles W. Wynn, when Lord Grenville went out of office; and I have the Laureateship. The salary of the latter was immediately appropriated, as far as it went, to a life insurance for £3,000. This, with an earlier insurance for £1,000, is the whole provision that I have made for my family; and what remains of the pension

after the annual payments are made, is the whole of my certain income. All beyond must be derived from my own industry. Writing for a livelihood, a livelihood is all that I have gained; for having also something better in view, and therefore never having courted popularity, nor written for the mere sake of gain, it has not been possible for me to lay by anything. Last year, for the first time in my life, I was provided with a year's expenditure beforehand. This exposition might suffice to show how utterly unbecoming and unwise it would be to accept the rank, which, so greatly to my honour, you have solicited for me, and which his Majesty would so graciously have conferred. But the tone of your letter encourages me to say more.

My life insurances have increased in value. With these, the produce of my library, my papers, and a posthumous edition of my works, there will probably be £12,000 for my family at my decease. Good fortune, with great exertions on the part of my surviving friends, might possibly extend this to £15,000, beyond which I do not dream of any further possibility. I had bequeathed the whole to my wife, to be divided ultimately between our four children; and having thus provided for them, no man could have been more contented with his lot, nor more thankful to that Providence on whose especial blessing he knew that he was constantly, and as it were immediately, dependent for his daily bread.

But the confidence which I used to feel in myself is now failing. I was young, in health and heart, on my last birthday, when I completed my sixtieth year. Since then I have been shaken at the root. It has pleased God to visit me with the severest of all domestic afflictions, those alone excepted into which guilt enters. My wife, a true helpmate as ever man was blessed with, lost her senses a few months ago. She is now in a lunatic asylum; and broken sleep, and anxious thoughts, from which there is no escape in the night season, have made me feel how more than possible it is that a sudden stroke may deprive me of those

faculties, by the exercise of which this poor family has hitherto been supported. Even in the event of my death, their condition would, by our recent calamity, be materially altered for the worse; but if I were rendered helpless, all our available means would procure only a respite from actual distress.

Under these circumstances, your letter, Sir, would in other times have encouraged me to ask for such an increase of pension as might relieve me from anxiety on this score. Now that lay sinecures are in fact abolished, there is no other way by which a man can be served, who has no profession wherein to be promoted, and whom any official situation would take from the only employment for which the studies and the habits of forty years have qualified him. This way, I am aware, is not now to be thought of, unless it were practicable as part of a plan for the encouragement of literature; but to such a plan perhaps these times might not be unfavourable.

The length of this communication would require an apology, if its substance could have been compressed; but on such an occasion it seemed a duty to say what I have said; nor, indeed, should I deserve the kindness which you have expressed, if I did not explicitly declare how thankful I should be to profit by it.—I have the honour to remain, With the sincerest respect, Your most faithful and obliged servant,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

244. TO THE RIGHT HON. C. W. W. WYNN, M.P.

Keswick, Feb. 7, 1835.

MY DEAR WYNN,—I was prevented from sending my note of yesterday evening by to-day's post, and this morning brought a letter from Henry Taylor, which tells me that the affair of the proffered baronetcy is no secret, he having been told by young Barrow that his father and I were to be Gazetted at the same time. This, however, is one of those cases in which no one who knows me and my circumstances could for a

moment suppose that I should act otherwise than as I have done.

Henry Taylor prevented me from sending a copy of my letter to Brougham to Sir R. Peel, for it seems Lord Aberdeen had shown it to him; probably you have seen it by this time. That which I have now written is in a very different tone. When I wrote to Brougham, it was with a thorough distrust of his intentions, a strong dislike of his public conduct, a proper respect for his station, and a feeling withal that we should very well have liked each other in private life. I could shake hands with him willingly, as well as constantly, and yet let him see that I could not but smile when he was trying to feel my pulse. In the present case I have no doubt that Sir R. Peel wishes to serve me, and therefore I have laid before him, as briefly as possible, my situation, and told him how thankful I should be to be relieved from any apprehension concerning the means of support in case I am deprived of the power of exerting myself. I had said in my letter that I could afford to die, but not to be disabled; the words came naturally from my pen, but I struck them out, lest they should look as if I were endeavouring to trick out a plain statement.

He has evidently supposed (like many others) that I have realized a fortune by my writings, and may, perhaps, when he is undeceived in this respect, think that it must be my own fault if I have not. But I have nothing wherewith to reproach myself on this score. Except in the one great imprudence of taking literature for a profession (the greatest which any man can commit, and yet the one to which I owe the happiness of my life, the estimation which I now possess, and that in which I shall be held hereafter)—except in this, no one could in the main have conformed himself more to the rules of prudence. I have been frugal and laborious, and, except in books, I have very rarely incurred any expense that might have been avoided; and without that expenditure, residing where I do, I could not possibly have acquired the knowledge which I now

have, nor have produced the works which I have written.

There is something comical in having been returned to Parliament without my own consent, and in like manner having a baronetcy asked for me and granted, as if Fortune were playing the fool with me. It would be a jade's trick indeed, were she one day to confer upon me a real benefit, and it should come too late. God bless you, my dear Wynn.—Yours most affectionately, R. S.

245. Robert Southey to Sir Robert Peel

Keswick, April 7, 1835.

My dear Sir,—You have conferred on me a substantial benefit sufficient to relieve me from anxiety concerning the means of subsistence, whenever my strength may fail, and equal to wishes that have always been kept within due bounds. Individually, therefore, I am not less grateful to you than, as one of those who retain the old feelings and principles of Englishmen, I must ever be on public grounds.

Were it not from the rumours (which yet I hope are untrue) that your health has suffered, I should regard the present aspects, not, indeed, with complacency, but without uneasiness or alarm. While we have you to look to I cannot doubt that the nation will be saved from revolution, and that, under Providence, you will be the means of saving it. For if you now retire from power it cannot be long before you will be borne in again upon the spring-tide of public opinion. Nothing in the course of public affairs has ever appeared to me more certain than this. —I have the honour to remain, Sir Robert, with the sincerest respect, Your grateful and obedient servant,

Robert Southey.

246. To Henry Taylor

Keswick, April 7, 1835.

My dear H. T.,—To-day has brought Sir R. Peel's announcement that he has signed the warrant for an additional pension of £300. This is just what I thought likely, what I think reasonable, and what, if I had been desired to name the sum for myself, I should have fixed on, with this difference only, that I would have had the amount of both pensions without deductions.

They give me, however, an income of £375 a year, subject to no other contingencies than those of the state,—and I am contented and thankful

God bless you! R. S.

247. To Henry Taylor

Keswick, June 6, 1835.

S. T. C.'s *Table Talk* came to me yesterday. There is scarcely an opinion there upon any subject (not in the transcendental sphere) with which I do not agree; without any communication we had travelled the same road. I have a very full account of Asgill ready for the fourth volume. Coleridge knew only part of his history.

The portrait is the worst that I have seen of him. There was no week in which Coleridge's talk would not have furnished as much matter worthy of preservation as these two volumes contain. Henry Coleridge has kept marvellously clear of indiscretion in his perilous talk. But in what he says (p. lxix) about his struggles against the habit of taking opium, every one who knew Coleridge from the time of his return from Malta till he took up his abode with the Gillmans could contradict him.

There are two streams of which Dante makes the purged spirit drink before it enters Paradise. Lethe is the one; the other, which he calls Eunoe, was to bring back the remembrance of all that it is not better to

forget. One who writes Coleridge's life (if he is fully acquainted with it) must often wish to drink of both. God bless you!

248. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, June 22, 1835.

The great word has no meaning whatever, but is of great use, which you will see explained and exemplified in the fourth volume, and for which use I composed it myself seven or eight-and-thirty years ago. It then became a household word, but all those who used it with me have departed, or are now far away. On the day when the book arrived, when I went down to supper, Cuthbert was so full of that chapter that he rose from his seat before supper was ended to show me the long word, and he read the whole chapter to me that I might see what a queer book it was—the queerest he had ever seen! Twenty years before that very chapter had taken the fancy of his brother, to whom I read the beginning when he came to his lessons the morning after it had been written, and he too entered fully into the humour of it. The book brings to me as many recollections of *this* kind as the sight of wild flowers in spring, and the singing of birds—sights and sounds that always carry us back to the past.

Miss Barker, who then lived in the next house, was the Bhow Begum: that whole chapter is from the life, and the book grew out of that night's conversation, exactly as is there related. But to go further back with its history, there is a story of Dr. D. D. of D. and his horse Nobs, which has, I believe, been made into a hawker's book. Coleridge used to tell it, and the humour lay in making it as long-winded as possible; it suited, however, my long-windedness better than his, and I was frequently called upon for it by those who enjoyed it, and sometimes I volunteered it when Mrs. Coleridge protested against its being told. As you may suppose, it was never told twice alike, except as to names and the leading features.

When I began the book, my view did not extend beyond two volumes. In the course of twenty years, however, enough in quantity (though not in sequence) for three was written, and a superabundance of materials collected for more. Miss Hutchinson[1] then persuaded me to begin to print, Miss H. saying that, if it was delayed longer, few of those who were in the secret and would enjoy it most would be living to enjoy it. The greater part of it she transcribed for the press—this having been her amusement for many years whenever she visited us.

Of the volume, which you will receive perhaps as soon as this letter, nearly four-fifths have been written since the two former were published, and about a fourth part while it was in the press. Enough, certainly, for three more is written, and how much there may be to interweave in these, who can tell? The bookseller's report of a prodigious sale is a bookseller's useful puff. One thousand copies were printed, and the *Quarterly Review* and the talk carried off little more than half that number by midsummer last. If another hundred has since dropped off, I should be much surprised; but the new volume may put the remaining copies in motion.

Intending little more at first than to play the fool in a way that might amuse the wise, and becoming 'a sadder and a wiser man' as I proceeded, I perceived that there was no way in which I could so conveniently dispose of some of my multifarious collections, nor so well send into the world some wholesome but unpalatable truths, nor advance speculations upon dark subjects, without giving offence or exciting animadversion. With something therefore of *Tristram Shandy* in its character, something of Rabelais, more of Montaigne, and a little of old Burton, the predominant character is still my own.

It was not till the book went to press that I thought of putting headings to the chapters, and finding mottoes for each.—God bless you. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

[1] See p. 500.

249. To Mrs. Hughes

Keswick, July 1, 1835.

My dear Mrs. Hughes,—Our domestic prospects are darkening upon us daily. I know not whether the past or the present seems most like a dream to me, so great and strange is the difference. But, yet a little while, and all will again be at the best.

I should be glad to see Lady Greenly again, and will not go into Herefordshire (should I ever again go there) without endeavouring so to do. We are not related. The connexion between the two families was that her aunt married my great uncle, the Rev. Herbert Bradford, who had the living (or curacy, I am not sure which) of Shobdon, and from whom two small estates, one near Kington, and the other at Llandrindod, have descended to my cousin Edward Hill. Mrs. Bradford had no children, and died before her husband, who died himself before I was born. The chronology shows that Mr. Greenly must have been many years younger than his sister. Mr. Bradford's mother was a Croft (thence the name Herbert in my family), and through her I am descended from Owen Glendower, Llewellyn, and Jorwerth, &c., and so about 999th cousin to our friend C. W. W. W.

Lockhart would not be so unpopular as he is, if his countenance were not so expressive, or rather his features so marked that they convey a much stronger expression than is intended. Thus a look from him appears haughty and sarcastic, which would be inoffensive, or perhaps affable, if his face were like dough and his eyes like scalded gooseberries. In whatever intercourse I have had with him, I have liked him much, and felt that, if we were neighbours, it is more than likely we should be friends. He and Murray between them have indeed contrived to affront me with the *Quarterly Review*. The story is not worth telling; it was a piece of disrespectful ill-usage, which I resent not upon either Lockhart or Murray, but upon the

Review personified; and you will agree with me that there cannot be a better use of that figure of speech called Personification than thus to create a sort of scapegoat, and lay my resentment upon it.

Last week has deprived me of one of my dearest friends, Miss Hutchinson, Mrs. Wordsworth's sister, who for more than thirty years has partaken of all the joys and sorrows of this family, and whose loss is, to my poor daughters, the severest that could have befallen them, out of their own nearest and dearest kin. She had lived a life of single blessedness, living about with her friends and relations, each wishing to keep her longer, for she was a comfort and a blessing to them all. When I went on my miserable journey to York in October last, she came over instantly to my dear girls. The last six months she had been nursing the elder Miss Wordsworth, whose death had been continually expected; and anxiety and fatigue no doubt had taken away so much of her strength, that after a short illness which had been apparently subdued, a suffusion on the brain took place from mere weakness. She loved us dearly,—no one indeed could love us better, and very few indeed knew us so well. It is a comfort to believe that she knows now how truly we loved her.

It is well that I have much to employ me, and am able to employ myself. With many and sad interruptions I shall soon be in the press both with Cowper and Dr. Bell.

God bless you, my dear Mrs. Hughes; believe me always—Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

250. TO THE REV. JOHN MILLER

Keswick, July 20, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR,—A copy of the 'unique Opus' came to me upon its first appearance, with my name printed in red letters on the back of the title-page, and 'from the author' on the fly-leaf, in a disguised hand; in

which hand, through the disguise, I thought I could recognize that of my very intimate friend, the author of *Philip Van Artevelde*. He, however, if my theory of the book be well founded, is too young a man to be the author. I take the preparatory postscript to have been written in sincerity and sadness: and if so, Henry Taylor was a boy at the time when (according to the statement there) the book was begun.

It may, I think, be inferred from everything about the book, and in it, that the author began it in his blithest years, with the intention of saying, under certain restrictions, *quidlibet de quolibet*, and making it a receptacle for his shreds and patches; that, beginning in jest, he grew more and more in earnest as he proceeded; that he dreamt over it, and brooded over it—laid it aside for months and years, resumed it after long intervals, and more often latterly in thoughtfulness than in mirth; fancied, perhaps, at last that he could put into it more of his mind than could conveniently be produced in any other form; and having supposed (as he tells us) when he began, that the whole of his yarn might be woven up in two volumes, got to the end of a third, without appearing to have diminished the balls that were already spun and wound when the work was commenced in the loom, to say nothing of his bags of wool.

To the reasons which he has assigned for not choosing to make himself publicly known this no doubt may be added, that the mask would not conceal him from those who knew him intimately, nor from the few by whom he might wish to be known; but it would protect his face from dirt, or anything worse that might be thrown at it.

I see in the work a little of Rabelais, but not much; more of *Tristram Shandy*, somewhat of Burton, and perhaps more of Montaigne; but methinks the *quintum quid* predominates.

I should be as much at a loss to know who is meant by REVERNE as you have been, if I had not accidentally heard that the only person to whom the

authorship is ascribed, upon anything like authority, is the Rev. Erskine Neale. Mrs. Hodson (formerly Margaret Holford) being in the neighbourhood of Doncaster, and desirous to hunt out, if she could, the history of the Opus, inquired about it there, and was assured by a bookseller that it was written by this gentleman, who had once resided in that place, but was then living at Hull. A clergyman whom she met there confirmed this, and there seemed to be no doubt about it in Doncaster. It is plain, therefore, that REVERNE designates this Great-everywhere-else-unknown; but I would not swear the book to him upon such evidence.

I can resolve another of your doubts. The concluding signature is not in the Garamna tongue, but in cryptography, or, what might more properly be called, in Dovean language comicography. If you look at it, and observe that k, e, w spell Q, you will find that when the nut is cracked it contains no kernel.

So much concerning a book which is a great favourite with my family, and has helped them sometimes to beguile what otherwise must have been hours of sorrow. Ten months have elapsed since our great affliction came upon us. This is the fortieth year of our marriage, and I know not whether the past or the present seems now to me most like a dream.

Amid these griefs, you will be glad to know that some substantial good has befallen us. One of the last acts of Sir Robert Peel's administration was to give me a pension of £300, in addition to that of £200 which I before possessed, the new one being (I am told) free from deductions; and this will emancipate me from all booksellers' work, when my present engagements are completed. If my life be prolonged, I shall then apply myself to the histories of Portugal, of the Monastic Orders, and of English Literature, from the point where Warton breaks off. Do not conclude that, in entertaining such designs at my age, I am *immemor sepulchri*. For of the first at least three-fourths of the labour has been performed, and I have been very many years preparing for all three, hoping

the time might come when I could afford to make them my chief employment.

Farewell, my dear Sir. Present my best wishes to your brother and sister, and—Believe me always, Yours with the sincerest respect and regard,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

251. To JOHN MAY

Keswick, June 13, 1836.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Time passes on so rapidly with me in the regular course of constant occupation, that it seems only a few days since that letter arrived which yours of this morning reminds me is two months old.

There is no change in my poor Edith, nor is there likely to be any. Thank God there is no suffering, not even so much as in a dream (of this I am fully convinced), and her bodily health is better than it had been for very many years.

Only one of my daughters is with me at present. Kate has been prevailed on to go to Rydal, and if it be possible to remove poor Dora Wordsworth to the coast (which is her only chance of recovery), she will go with her. The loss of Miss Hutchinson, which was the greatest we could have sustained out of our own nearest kin, has drawn the bonds of affection closer between dear Dora and my daughters, who were almost equally dear to the dead.

You will not wonder that the *Life of Cowper* was a subject better suited to my own state of mind at this time than almost any other could have been. It was something like relief to have thoughts, from which it is not possible that I could escape, diverted as it were from home. There are passages which I dare say you will have perceived would not have been written unless I had had something more than a theoretical knowledge of this most awful of all maladies.

I shall be very glad to see John Coleridge. The bishop sent me his kind remembrances from Demerara the other day. You ask if there be any likelihood of

seeing me in town? Not at present; nor is it possible for me to say when it may be fitting for me to leave home. My presence, though it may be little comfort to my poor wife, is a very great one to my daughters; my spirits help to keep up theirs, and with what they have to do for me in the way of transcribing, and the arrival of letters and packets which would cease during my absence, they would feel a great blank were they left to themselves. In her quieter moods, too, my poor Edith shows a feeling towards me, the last, perhaps, which will be utterly extirpated. How often am I reminded of my own lines, and made to feel what a woful thing it is—

> When the poor flesh surviving, doth entomb
> The reasonable soul.

You and I, my dear friend, have been afflicted in different ways, and both heavily. But the time is not far distant when we shall have all losses restored, and understand that the ways of Providence are always merciful to those who put their trust in it.

Bedford and his cousin, Miss Page, are coming to lodge at the foot of the garden in the course of a fortnight. I have known him from the year 1788; we became familiar in 1790, intimate in 1791, and have kept up a constant and most intimate intercourse ever since. So you may suppose how much I shall enjoy his society. Mary Page, too, is the oldest of my female friends.

God bless you, my dear old friend! and believe me always,—Yours most affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

252. To CAROLINE BOWLES

Bedminster, November 6, 1836.

HERE I am, dear Caroline, on the way to the Land's End. Monday we made for Birmingham, and thence, six miles, to an old and large house called Pipe Hayes, where Mr. Egerton Bagot (a clergyman and a widower), the son of Cowper's correspondent, is living like a hermit

alone. We dined with him that day, and remained till four o'clock on the Wednesday, during which time I read over all his father's correspondence, and found enough to repay me for the days so spent. But we saw no other person while we were there, such is the solitary life that he appears to lead. Thursday we went from Birmingham to Bristol, and here we are in the house of my old friend and early publisher Joseph Cottle, the simplest and kindest-hearted of men.

Alas! I have work to do which I could not get through at home.

This morning I am going to the church which I used to frequent with my grandmother, and have never entered since the year 1782.

The seat into which the sextoness introduced me (for the Cottles are dissenters) was exactly opposite the spot on which my grandmother's pew had stood. *That* I perfectly remembered, and recollected an old monument above it; but the whole inside of the church has been fitted up some ten or twenty years ago. Still it was the same church, externally unchanged, and the same hills were seen through the same windows; and perhaps—nay, probably even—of all the persons who had been present in that church when I was last in it, fifty-four years ago, I may have been the only survivor.

There have been times, and are, dear friend, when I feel like Eleëmon,[1] as if the fountain of tears were dry; as if my eyes had been seared, and my heart had been so often and so long upon the anvil that it had been rendered insensible. But to-day it was with great difficulty that I could so far command myself as not to let my emotions be seen.

After church we walked to Bristol, where I left a card with your kinsman of unhappy name. He was not returned from church. I shall accept no invitation, except to breakfast, during my stay here, because we are a mile and a half from the town, and because my evenings will be required for work. Cuthbert is very much pleased with Bristol, which Landor (who is here)

[1] See Southey's poem 'All For Love'.

agrees with me in thinking beyond all comparison the most interesting and beautiful city in England. I have shown him a great deal already, and shall show him to-morrow my grandmother's house and the garden—which was my Garden of Eden—where some of the fruit-trees which my grandfather had planted were standing when I was there in 1831. Tuesday, if weather be favourable, I shall take him to look at my old school at Corston.

We go on Saturday next to visit Bowles, then to Taunton, where my good aunt is ready and waiting for her release, at a great age. The hope of seeing her once more in this world has been one of the inducements to this journey, for she was as fond of Cuthbert when he was two years old as she had been of me when I was of the same age. We then go down the north coast to Derwent Coleridge, at the Land's End, and up the south, making sundry halts upon the way. Christmas I expect to pass with my old friend Lightfoot, near Crediton, and New Year's Day most probably with you. The resolution with which I left home was not to hurry myself upon this circuit, but to see as much as we could upon the way, and not to regard a week or two of time, or a little additional expense, upon a journey which (in its full extent) I am never likely to repeat, and which Cuthbert will always remember.

My accounts from home could not be more favourable. My first letter produced an expression of some interest in its contents; my absence occasions no uneasiness, and my return will, I dare say, be looked for with as much pleasure as my poor Edith is now capable of finding in anything. For myself, I shall be the better for this journey, shall lay up much for remembrance and for use, and be heartily glad to find myself once more at rest in my appointed course of duty. God bless you, dear, dear friend.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

253. To Miss Katharine Southey

Wells, Wednesday Evening, Nov. 16, 1836.

My dear Kate,—Look at the history of Bremhill, and you will see Bowles's parsonage; it is near the fine old church, and, as there are not many better livings, there are few more pleasantly situated. The garden is ornamented in his way, with a jet-fountain, something like a hermitage, an obelisk, a cross, and some inscriptions. Two swans, who answer to the names of Snowdrop and Lily, have a pond to themselves, and if they are not duly fed there at the usual time, up they march to the breakfast-room window. Mrs. Bowles has also a pet hawk called Peter, a name which has been borne by two of his predecessors. The view from the back of the house extends over a rich country, to the distant downs, and the white horse may be seen distinctly by better eyes than mine, without the aid of a glass.

Much as I had heard of Bowles's peculiarities, I should very imperfectly have understood his character, if I had not passed some little time under his roof. He has indulged his natural timidity to a degree little short of insanity, yet he sees how ridiculous it makes him, and laughs himself at follies which nevertheless he is continually repeating. He is literally afraid of everything. His oddity, his untidyness, his simplicity, his benevolence, his fears, and his good nature, make him one of the most entertaining and extraordinary characters I ever met with. He is in his seventy-third year, and for that age is certainly a fine old man, in full possession of all his faculties, though so afraid of being deaf, when a slight cold affects his hearing, that he puts a watch to his ear twenty times in the course of the day. Our reception was as hospitable as possible, Mrs. Bowles was as kind as himself, and everything was done to make us comfortable.

The Bishop, unluckily, is at Weymouth; he wrote

to Bowles to say how glad he should be to see us; but he will not be in Wells till this day week. Whether the Dean (Goodenough) is here, the people of the inn cannot tell.

Tell your dear mother that I earnestly wish to be at home again, and shall spend no time on the way that can be spared.

Love to all. So good night: and God bless you!

R. S.

254. To Charlotte Brontë

Keswick, March, 1837.

Madam,—You will probably, ere this, have given up all expectation of receiving an answer to your letter of December 29. I was on the borders of Cornwall when that letter was written; it found me a fortnight afterwards in Hampshire. During my subsequent movements in different parts of the country, and a tarriance of three busy weeks in London, I had no leisure for replying to it; and now that I am once more at home, and am clearing off the arrears of business which had accumulated during a long absence, it has lain unanswered till the last of a numerous file, not from disrespect or indifference to its contents, but because, in truth, it is not an easy task to answer it, nor a pleasant one to cast a damp over the high spirits and the generous desires of youth.

What you are I can only infer from your letter, which appears to be written in sincerity; though I may suspect that you have used a fictitious signature. Be that as it may, the letter and the verses bear the same stamp; and I can well understand the state of mind which they indicate. What I am you might have learnt by such of my publications as have come into your hands; and, had you happened to be acquainted with me, a little personal knowledge would have tempered your enthusiasm. You might have had your ardour in some degree abated by seeing a poet in the decline of life, and witnessing the effect which age produces upon our hopes and aspirations;

yet I am neither a disappointed man nor a discontented one, and you would never have heard from me any chilling sermons upon the text, 'All is vanity.'

It is not my advice that you have asked as to the direction of your talents, but my opinion of them; and yet the opinion may be worth little, and the advice much. You evidently possess, and in no inconsiderable degree, what Wordsworth calls 'the faculty of verse'. I am not depreciating it when I say that in these times it is not rare. Many volumes of poems are now published every year without attracting public attention, any one of which, if it had appeared half a century ago, would have obtained a high reputation for its author. Whoever, therefore, is ambitious of distinction in this way, ought to be prepared for disappointment.

But it is not with a view to distinction that you should cultivate this talent, if you consult your own happiness. I, who have made literature my profession, and devoted my life to it, and have never for a moment repented of the deliberate choice, think myself nevertheless bound in duty to caution every young man who applies as an aspirant to me for encouragement and advice against taking so perilous a course. You will say, that a woman has no need of such a caution: there can be no peril in it for her. In a certain sense this is true; but there is a danger of which I would, with all kindness and all earnestness, warn you. The day dreams in which you habitually indulge are likely to induce a distempered state of mind; and in proportion as all the ordinary uses of the world seem to you flat and unprofitable, you will be unfitted for them without becoming fitted for anything else. Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life, and it ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure will she have for it even as an accomplishment and a recreation. To those duties you have not yet been called, and, when you are, you will be less eager for celebrity. You will not seek in imagination for excitement, of which the vicissitudes of this life, and the anxieties from which you must not

hope to be exempted, be your state what it may, will bring with them but too much.

But do not suppose that I disparage the gift which you possess; nor that I would discourage you from exercising it. I only exhort you so to think of it, and so to use it, as to render it conducive to your own permanent good. Write poetry for its own sake; not in a spirit of emulation, and not with a view to celebrity: the less you aim at that, the more likely you will be to deserve, and finally to obtain it. So written, it is wholesome both for the heart and soul; it may be made the surest means, next to religion, of soothing the mind, and elevating it. You may embody in it your best thoughts and your wisest feelings, and in so doing discipline and strengthen them.

Farewell, Madam. It is not because I have forgotten that I was once young myself, that I write to you in this strain; but because I remember it. You will neither doubt my sincerity, nor my goodwill; and, however ill what has here been said may accord with your present views and temper, the longer you live the more reasonable it will appear to you. Though I may be but an ungracious adviser, you will allow me, therefore, to subscribe myself, with the best wishes for your happiness here and hereafter,—Your true friend,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

255. FROM CHARLOTTE BRONTË TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

March 16 [1837].

SIR,—I cannot rest till I have answered your letter, even though by addressing you a second time I should appear a little intrusive; but I must thank you for the kind and wise advice you have condescended to give me. I had not ventured to hope for such a reply; so considerate in its tone, so noble in its spirit. I must suppress what I feel, or you will think me foolishly enthusiastic.

At the first perusal of your letter I felt only shame and regret that I had ever ventured to trouble you with

my crude rhapsody; I felt a painful heat rise to my face when I thought of the quires of paper I had covered with what once gave me so much delight, but which now was only a source of confusion; but after I had thought a little, and read it again and again, the prospect seemed to clear. You do not forbid me to write; you do not say that what I write is utterly destitute of merit. You only warn me against the folly of neglecting real duties for the sake of imaginative pleasures; of writing for the love of fame; for the selfish excitement of emulation. You kindly allow me to write poetry for its own sake, provided I leave undone nothing which I ought to do, in order to pursue that single, absorbing, exquisite gratification. I am afraid, sir, you think me very foolish. I know the first letter I wrote to you was all senseless trash from beginning to end; but I am not altogether the idle dreaming being it would seem to denote. My father is a clergyman of limited though competent income, and I am the eldest of his children. He expended quite as much in my education as he could afford in justice to the rest. I thought it therefore my duty, when I left school, to become a governess. In that capacity I find enough to occupy my thoughts all day long, and my head and hands too, without having a moment's time for one dream of the imagination. In the evenings, I confess, I do think, but I never trouble any one else with my thoughts. I carefully avoid any appearance of pre-occupation and eccentricity, which might lead those I live amongst to suspect the nature of my pursuits. Following my father's advice—who from my childhood has counselled me, just in the wise and friendly tone of your letter—I have endeavoured not only attentively to observe all the duties a woman ought to fulfil, but to feel deeply interested in them. I don't always succeed, for sometimes when I'm teaching or sewing I would rather be reading or writing; but I try to deny myself; and my father's approbation amply rewarded me for the privation. Once more allow me to thank you with sincere gratitude.

I trust I shall never more feel ambitious to see my name in print; if the wish should rise, I'll look at Southey's letter, and suppress it. It is honour enough for me that I have written to him, and received an answer. That letter is consecrated; no one shall ever see it but papa and my brother and sisters. Again I thank you. This incident, I suppose, will be renewed no more; if I live to be an old woman, I shall remember it thirty years hence as a bright dream. The signature which you suspected of being fictitious is my real name. Again, therefore, I must sign myself C. BRONTË.

PS. Pray, sir, excuse me for writing to you a second time; I could not help writing, partly to tell you how thankful I am for your kindness, and partly to let you know that your advice shall not be wasted, however sorrowfully and reluctantly it may at first be followed. C. B.

256. To CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Keswick, March 22, 1837.

DEAR MADAM,—Your letter has given me great pleasure, and I should not forgive myself if I did not tell you so. You have received admonition as considerately and as kindly as it was given. Let me now request that, if you ever should come to these lakes while I am living here, you will let me see you. You would then think of me afterwards with the more goodwill, because you would perceive that there is neither severity nor moroseness in the state of mind to which years and observation have brought me.

It is, by God's mercy, in our power to attain a degree of self-government, which is essential to our own happiness, and contributes greatly to that of those around us. Take care of over-excitement, and endeavour to keep a quiet mind (even for your health it is the best advice that can be given you): your moral and spiritual improvement will then keep pace with the culture of your intellectual powers.

And now, Madam, God bless you!—Farewell, and believe me to be your sincere friend, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

257. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, July 23, 1837.

That you should like Cottle's book, dear Caroline, is as impossible as it would be for you to dislike Cottle himself, if you knew him as I know him; but unless you knew him thus thoroughly, you could not believe that such simple-heartedness and such inordinate vanity were to be found in the same person. One thing he has made me fully sensible of, and that is, how liable the most cautious biographer is to be misled by what should seem to be the most trustworthy documents. Such a confusion of times and circumstances as he has made in his *Recollections* I never met with in any other book; and for this reason, no doubt, that my own knowledge could never in any other instance enable me to detect it.

Wordsworth and I have always dreaded the indiscretion of Coleridge's admirers, and the exposure of his character which was certain to ensue. Cottle has withheld a good deal, upon his own sense of propriety, little scrupulous as he may seem to have been; and he has struck out more at my desire; and yet the impression which his book leaves is just what you describe upon all those who feel that intellectual strength affords no excuse for the disregard of moral obligation.

Charles Lamb's letters have just reached me. If the whole story could have been told, this would have been one of the most painfully interesting books that ever came from the press. When I saw Talfourd in January last, he seemed fully aware how much better it would have been to have delayed the publication for some years. But in this age, when a person of any notoriety dies, they lose as little time in making a book of him as they used to do in making a mummy. To be sure, there are some reputations which will not *keep*, and must therefore be brought to market while they are fresh. But poor Lamb's is not of that kind. His memory will retain its fragrance as long as the best spice that ever was expended upon one of the Pharaohs.

You may well suppose that all these recent publications, in which there is so much concerning myself, bring with them to me anything but what is cheering.

August 12.—To-day I send off the advertisement, &c., to the concluding volume of Cowper's works. The edition is now complete. But to complete my purpose there must be two volumes of *Cowperiana*, which you will have in due time. It is a great thing to have this off my hands.—Dear friend, God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

258. To JOHN MAY

Keswick, Aug. 27, 1837.

MY DEAR JOHN MAY,—I heard of you from the Doctor, who arrived here this day week on his circuit, and took his departure on Wednesday. I should have accompanied him as far as Furness Abbey, if my shoes had not unluckily quarrelled with my feet in descending a mountain the day before his arrival; and when shoe-leather and toe-leather disagree, the weakest, as in most disputes, is the sufferer. This has cost me eight days' confinement to the house; and it will be two or three more before I can venture to walk freely.

Can you not make your arrangements so that your visit to Tarring may take place when Cuthbert is there, which he will be in about a fortnight? From the middle of September till the latter end of October, you would find him there; and it would be a great pleasure to me that you should see more of him than you could do when he is passing through town. He is to matriculate in October, and we hope he may pass his Christmas at home. The railways already make such a saving of time and expense upon the journey, that it will be worth while for him to come home for short vacations. The moral good which the railways will occasion by enabling friends and relations to meet who could never otherwise have met, or only with serious difficulty and expense, goes far in my mind to counterbalance some of

their apparent evils. It will very soon be but a day's journey from Kendal to London; and if I live till that time, I shall think little of going to town for a week.

You ask about my employments. *Cowper* is off my hands, and I shall not take up the *Cowperiana* for some weeks to come. The *Book of the Church* also will be cleared off with the next proof. I have only had to correct the sheets, adding the references: the latter pains has been taken long ago; the rest was only an affair of time. The first volume of my poems is printed, all except the prefatory part, of which I expect the proof every day. This volume has cost me much pains, as you will see by comparing it with the last edition of *Joan of Arc*. The second volume also required a great deal of correction, most of which I have given it; and five sheets are printed. *Wat Tyler* takes his place here, that no one may complain of its omission. A short advertisement introduces it. I know not yet whether the *Devil's Walk* will come more conveniently into this volume, or into the third. *Dr. Bell's Life* is in good progress; and I shall soon be engaged again with the *Admirals*.

The fourth volume of the *Doctor, &c.*, has been sent me like the former, and with 'from the Author' in the same disguised hand. I like it quite as well as its predecessors, which is saying much. But when is there to be an end of the book? for, as for the author running himself dry, you see what he says upon that subject; indeed one may perceive that he lays in as fast as he lays out. The termination should seem to depend upon his humour in some degree, but more certainly upon that of the public, who are likely to be tired long before he is. I think it likely that the book will die of a slow decline, though with a galloping *consumption* it might last as long as the author himself. For, in the common course of things, when a work is published volume by volume, the sale continually diminishes; more sell of the first than of the second, and the longer the series the greater the falling off upon every succeeding volume. Some persons die, others fail to complete

their sets; and of a work like this it is not to be expected, when it gets beyond a fourth volume, hardly, indeed, beyond a third, that people will be found to purchase a long set at its present price. They who buy fashionable novels in three volumes, price £1 11*s.* 6*d.*, which is the ordinary extent and price, must have more money than wit; and I suspect that those who would be willing to purchase at the same rate a book which is not fashionable, but only talked about, are likely to have more wit than money, and therefore cannot be purchasers. My notion is that the author will go on as long as no loss is sustained upon the volume, supposing it may be for his interest to do so, with a view to a wider sale when it is printed in a cheap form (two volumes, perhaps, comprised in one), and to a permanent demand when it has established its place in English literature as a work *sui generis*. I am amused at hearing that it is ascribed to me, but certainly shall not take credit for it, like Porson.

Henry tells me that if I live till the year 1840, there will be a considerable addition to the sum for which my life is insured; and the question suggests itself whether it would be advisable to insure my life (in some other office, of course) till that time to the amount of the contingent bonus, so as to convert that contingence to a certainty. Can you tell me what the bonus is likely to be, and what such an insurance would cost, I having entered upon my 64th year on the 12th of this month. Give me your opinion, too, upon this question. My own is that if the bonus be considerable, it would be prudent in my circumstances to secure it.

Among my employments I omitted to mention a reviewal of *Mrs. Bray's Letters* for the *Quarterly Review*: those letters have brought me again into communication with it; I am also about to review the new edition of Sir Thomas Browne's works, one of my favourite authors.

I see Mr. Gillman announces *Memoirs of S. T. C.*, which I dare say will be quite as objectionable as Cottle's, but in a very different way. In days of old,

when an author was dead and buried *Requiescat in pace* might have been written on his tombstone; but those days are past, and he must expect now to be dissected and embalmed, to have his rags presented as relics, and to be canonized by his devotees. The confusion of time and circumstances in Cottle's book shows me how little that appears to be the most authentic materials for biography can be relied on. Greater mistakes of this kind no writer ever committed; any one who should draw from it, as far as it gives an account either of Coleridge's life, or of mine, would be egregiously misled. This book, and the *Memoirs of Sir Walter Scott*, and *Charles Lamb's Letters*, bring to me many painful recollections. I could explain some things in all of them, and add more. As for my own biography, it has been suspended, almost as much for want of heart as for want of time. There is a joy in looking forward; but it is purely painful to look back. God bless you, my dear old friend. My kindest remembrances to your daughter.—Yours, most affectionately,

R. S.

259. To the Right Hon. C. W. W. Wynn, M.P.

Keswick, Oct. 3, 1837.

My dear Wynn,—A long time has elapsed since you have heard of me, or I of you. Yet you have never been a day out of sight, for your portrait (one of the best that ever was engraved) hangs in full view of my evening seat. What have I been doing the while? The question is more easily asked than answered; for what with frequent distractions, large demands upon little leisure (many of them from persons who have no right to draw upon it), an inclination for doing too many things at once, and when anything ought to be done a propensity, as was said of you know who, *to be doing something else*,—owing to these and other causes I seem to have done little, though in truth I am never unemployed.

The irksome part of my task with the poems is over

—that of tinkering the early pieces. The mere sight of some, God knows, is painful enough, when my present circumstances contrast so miserably with the recollections which they call up. I have completed the revisal of *Thalaba*, and begun that of *Madoc*. The versification in the former has been improved in many places; in the latter there is little that I can mend; and in the remaining long poems I have chiefly to beware of altering for alteration's sake. This, however, is not a besetting sin with me.

The editor has sent me the first volume of a collection *Des Documents Inédités sur l'Histoire de France*, published by the King's order, and under the care of the Minister of Public Instruction. The volume is very curious, containing a contemporary history of the Crusade against the Albigenses in Provençal verse. I have never seen a book better edited in all respects. The metre is remarkable,—stanzas of unequal length from ten to forty or fifty lines all upon one rhyme, except a short line at the close, which sets the rhyme for the following stanza. The unknown author seems to have been an honest man of very considerable genius. He sets out with a pious hatred of the heretics; and it gradually gives way to his feeling of horror at the atrocious cruelty of their persecutors.

Oct. 10.—I have been dutifully employed this whole evening in correcting the pronunciation of Mathraval.

Oct. 18.—This morning has brought me your letter. It has come to a mournful house. My poor wife is now sinking fast—thank God, without any suffering either of body or mind, but miserably weak, and more emaciated than I could have supposed any living creature to be who retained any power of motion. Life has been to her for the last three years like an uneasy dream; and it cannot be long before she will wake from it in a better world. Such a release has long been to be wished; and yet it has been dreaded, for she has become as a child to us.

We have been married two-and-forty years; and a more affectionate and devoted helpmate never man was

blessed with. There never was a tenderer or more careful mother; and, thank God, she has always had reason enough left to be sensible that her children were devoted to her.

God bless you, my dear Wynn. I am much shaken, and shall be more so; but I know where to look for comfort and to find it. The loss has long been sustained, the worst is past, and what remains is but one sharp sorrow, which must end in thankfulness.

R. S.

260. To Mrs. Hodson

Keswick, Oct. 27, 1837.

My dear Mrs. Hodson,—Happily, pecuniary assistance is not needed. There is reason to think I shall suffer no eventual loss. The price to have been paid me was 1,000 guineas. That sum not having been paid upon the completion of the work, the copyright rests with me, and the property of the edition cannot be sold without my assignment. The sum was intended to cover Cuthbert's expenses through his University course. Even if it should be materially diminished, or lost, it will not distress me. Dr. Bell left me £1,000: that sum is vested in the French funds, and, if need be, may be drawn out for this purpose. But my own opinion is, that the copyright is good security for payment in full. I had written good part of a letter in reply to yours, saying that I have no other concern with the publishers of my poems than to receive from them half the eventual profits, which half is not the lion's half. I was writing also playfully about the Doctor; but it was an effort, and I had no heart to go on, for our long tragedy is drawing to its close. The change has been very rapid. Thank God, there is no suffering either of body or mind. How long this may last it is impossible to say. To all appearance she is in the very last stage of emaciation and weakness. There is no strength for suffering left, she will probably fall asleep like an infant, and you may imagine what a comfort it is for me to believe, as I verily do, after

two-and-forty years of marriage, that no infant was ever more void of offence towards God and man. I never knew her to do an unkind act, nor say an unkind word.

We are as well as we can be in this state. The event has long been to be desired—the worst has long been past—and when one sharp grief is over, we shall be thankful for her deliverance from the body of this death. God bless you, my dear Mrs. Hodson!

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

261. To ———

Keswick, Nov. 3, 1837.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have never seen the book to which you allude, but I suppose it to be that which bears the fictitious name of Search. The end which I should propose and expect from any theological investigation would be simply a conviction that Christianity is neither a fable cunningly devised, nor a superstition which has sprung from a combination of favouring causes, but that it is a scheme of Providence indicated by prophecies, and proved by miracles. With this consent of the understanding, I should be satisfied in Y——'s case. The rest would assuredly follow in due time and in natural course.

I could agree with you that 'personal identity unbroken by death' were little to be desired, if it were all—if we were to begin a new life in the nakedness of that identity. But when we carry with us in that second birth all that makes existence valuable, our hopes and aspirations, our affections, our eupathies, our capacities of happiness and of improvement; when we are to be welcomed into another sphere by those dear ones who have gone before us, and are in our turn to welcome there those whom we left on earth, surely, of all God's blessings the revelation which renders this certain is the greatest. There have been times in my life when my heart would have been broken, if this belief had not supported me. At this moment it is worth more than all the world could give.

Nov. 4.

The end cannot be far off, and all is going on most mercifully. For several days when I have supported her down stairs, I have thought it was for the last time; and every night when she has been borne up, it has seemed to me that she would never be borne down alive. Thank God, there is no pain, no suffering of any kind; and only such consciousness as is consolation. God bless you! R. S.

262. To Joseph Cottle

Keswick, Nov. 16, 1837.

My dear Cottle,—It pleased God to release my poor dear Edith this morning from a pitiable state of existence, though we have always had the consolation of thinking it was more painful to witness than to endure. She had long been wasting away, and for the last month rapidly. For ten days she was unable to leave her bed. There seemed to be no suffering till excess of weakness became pain, and at no time any distress of mind; for being sensible where she was and with whom, and of the dutiful affection with which she was attended, she was sensible of nothing more.

My poor daughters have been mercifully supported through their long trial. Now that the necessity for exertion is over, they feel that prostration which in such cases always ensues. But they have discharged their duties to the utmost, and they will have their reward. It is a blessed deliverance!—the change from life to death, and from death to life! inexpressibly so for her.—My dear old friend, Yours affectionately, in weal or in woe, Robert Southey.

263. To Grosvenor C. Bedford

Keswick, Nov. 24, 1837.

My dear G.,—This event could not have been regarded otherwise than as a deliverance at any time, since there ceased to be a hope of mental restoration;

and for several weeks it was devoutly to be desired. Yet it has left a sense of bereavement which I had not expected to feel, lost as she had been to me for the last three years, and worse than lost. During more than two-thirds of my life, she had been the chief object of my thoughts, and I of hers. No man ever had a truer helpmate! no children a more careful mother. No family was ever more wisely ordered, no housekeeping ever conducted with greater prudence, or greater comfort. Everything was left to her management, and managed so quietly and so well, that, except in times of sickness and sorrow, I had literally no cares.

I always looked upon it as conducing much to our happiness, that we were of the same age, for in proportion to any perceptible disparity on that point, the marriage union is less complete. And so completely was she part of myself, that the separation makes me feel like a different creature. While she was herself I had no sense of growing old, or at most only such as the mere lapse of time brought with it; there was no weight of years upon me, my heart continued young, and my spirits retained their youthful buoyancy. Now, the difference of five-and-thirty years between me and Bertha continually makes me conscious of being an old man. There is no one to partake with me the recollections of the best and happiest portion of my life; and for that reason, were there no other, such recollections must henceforth be purely painful, except when I connect them with the prospect of futurity.

You will not suppose that I encourage this mood of mind. But it is well sometimes to look sorrow in the face; and always well to understand one's own condition.

Meantime you may be assured that I shall not be wanting in self-management, as far as that can avail; that I shall think as little as I can of the past, and pursue as far as possible my wonted course of life.

Remember me most kindly to Miss Page. God bless you, my dear Grosvenor! R. S.

264. To Mrs. Hughes

Keswick, Dec. 7, 1837.

My dear Mrs. Hughes,—I should sooner have replied to you, if letters had not poured in upon me,—not a few being from persons of whom I had long lost sight; but in whom the tidings of my poor Edith's death, when they read of it in the newspapers, revived a painful recollection of the days that are gone. Too many of these I have had to answer.

My affairs with Baldwin and Cradock are *in statu quo*. The money is in jeopardy; but I believe they mean well towards me, and it seems likely that eventually I shall be paid. Be that as it may, the matter will never cost me any vexation, inasmuch as I have nothing for which to blame myself in the business. Not that I take any credit for this sort of philosophy, which belongs as much to my disposition as to my way of thinking and of life. 'Patience perforce' was what I heard of every day in Portugal,—the most useful of all exhortations, and, moreover, the most easy to put in practice, for it *must* be practised at last, whether you like it or not.

How the edition of my poems may answer, remains to be seen. The Longmen wrote me word, about ten days after the first volume had been published, 'that they had printed 1,500 copies, and had only 350 remaining;' but they added, 'that no doubt many were in the hands of the trade; still,' they said, 'this was very satisfactory,' and they thought it not unlikely that a second edition might be wanted. They have stereotyped the book, which implies more expectation of a good sale than I have ever entertained: 1,500 copies would afford very little profit therefore, what with the additional expense thus incurred in the first instance, the engravings, the enormous cost of advertisements, and the low price of the volume; but the great outlay is at first, and upon a second impression the profit would be considerable in proportion. It is a great satisfaction to me, whatever the success may be, that

I undertook thus to revise this portion of my works; it was what I owed to myself and to my children, and if it had not been done now I should never have had heart to undertake it.

You mention Cottle's *Recollections*. Nothing ever made me so fully aware how incorrect the most careful biography must inevitably be than what I saw in this book, and in the *Life* of Sir Walter, and in poor Charles Lamb's *Letters*. Some years hence any one who should undertake to write my life, as I have written Cowper's, would think there could be no better authority than what was to be found in these works,—directly, indeed, in the one, and incidentally in the other two. The confusion in Cottle's *Recollections* is greater than any one would think possible. He has only his memory to trust to, never having made any notes with a view to be-Boswelling his friends. Coleridge's letters to him were not fully dated; and in consequence he has confounded times, places, and circumstances in a way which must utterly mislead the unlucky biographer who goes to his books for materials. Foster the essayist was the person who chiefly incited him to this publication, and who has now reviewed it in the *Eclectic*. Foster is a fierce Puritan in politics, who would kiss the axe that beheaded him; and in religion he is a Calvinist of the deepest die—engrained.

Cottle himself is one of the kindest hearted of human beings, and, at the same time, unites in his character the extremes of simplicity and vanity. The book shows something of this. I was in time to make him strike out a good deal; but as to rectifying his mistakes, that was impossible. In the old Queen of Portugal's time, an engineer was sent to inspect the Bugio, a castle at the mouth of the Tagus, and report what was necessary for putting it in an effective state. His report was comprised in three words,—*A new fort.*

God bless you, my dear Mrs. Hughes.—Yours, very truly, R. S.

265. To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, January 21, 1838.

I got Warner's *Recollections* for a few shillings from a catalogue lately; you know I looked at it at Buckland. How much better it is in every respect than any other of his books that have fallen in my way. But it is hardly possible that any one should not write agreeably when relating his own recollections of early life. Even with all allowances for vanity and self-deceit, the truest of all history is what we thus draw from ourselves.

Many of the persons whom Warner mentions I knew something of, both of his Christ Church acquaintances and his Bath ones. What a tremendous change has taken place in the general character of society within his memory and mine, though I suppose him to be nearly ten years my senior. And as if the old mail coach rate of eight miles an hour was not fast enough for the march of civilization, the devil has been raised in the shape of steam to impel us at his own pace. You remember the proverb 'Needs must go when *he* drives'. One of the worst things attending this revolution in public travelling is, it leaves you no choice. At this time there is only one coach, which runs from Manchester to London. The Birmingham Railway has already produced this effect, and an utter recklessness to the convenience and safety of the passengers is one consequence of the monopoly which has thus been gained. The confusion when the luggage of a whole train is thrown down at the end of its course is said to exceed anything one has ever seen of this kind. As to personal safety, there must be less danger than in an overloaded coach, and there is also less fatigue in the motion itself, to say nothing of the great saving in that respect by going twenty miles an hour, instead of eight. But, after all, slow and sure would be more to my liking. My pleasantest, or I might better say happiest, travels have been either at a mule's footpace, or with a knapsack on my own shoulders.

The Longmans' account of the poems to my brother is, that they are selling 'very fairly'. The impression of 1,500, they say, will just about cover the expenses, leaving profit to be derived from the future use of the stereotypes and engravings. The profit upon any additional 500 would be considerable; but I suppose that not many sets will be called for after the monthly publication is completed; there will be more demand for single volumes, or portions. What an abomination is the engraving of Keswick in the third volume! I never saw anything worse.—God bless you, dear friend. ROBERT SOUTHEY

266. To C. C. SOUTHEY

Keswick, Feb. 7, 1838.

MY DEAR CUTHBERT,—It is right that you should clearly understand what you have to reckon on for your ways and means. Two hundred a year will be a liberal allowance, probably above the average at Queen's, which has not the disadvantage of being an expensive college. Whether I live or die, this is provided for you. If I live and do well, my current occupations will supply it. In any other event, there is Dr. Bell's Legacy in the French Funds, even if the Cowperage should not be forthcoming.

It is an uncomfortable thing to be straitened in your situation; but for most undergraduates it is far more injurious to have too much. If you can save from your income, I shall be glad; and I have confidence enough in you to believe that you would have much more satisfaction in saving from it, than you could derive from any needless expenditure. I do not mean that you should receive less from me, if you find that you can do with less; but that you should lay by the surplus for your own use. Next to moral and religious habits, habits of frugality are the most important; they belong, indeed, to our duties. In this virtue your dear mother never was surpassed. Had it not been for her admirable manage-

ment, this house could not have been kept up, nor this family brought up as they were. God never blessed any man with a truer helpmate than she was to me in this and in every other respect, till she ceased to be herself.

I dwell upon this, not as supposing you need any exhortation upon the subject, for I have the most perfect confidence in you; no father ever had less apprehension for a son in sending him to the University. But frugality is a virtue which will contribute continually and most essentially to your comfort; without it it is impossible that you should do well, and you know not how much nor how soon it may be needed. It is far from my intention, if I should live till you take your degree, to hurry you into the world, and bid you shift for yourself as soon as you can. On the contrary, there is nothing on which I could look forward with so much hope, as to directing your studies after you have finished your collegiate course, and training you to build upon my foundations. That object is one which it would be worth wishing to live for. But when you take your degree, I, if I should then be living, shall be hard upon three score and ten. My whole income dies with me. In its stead there would be (at this time) about £8,000 immediately, from the Insurance, and this is all that there will be (except 2 or £300 for current expenses) till my papers and copyrights can be made available. At first, therefore, great frugality will be required, though eventually there may be a fair provision for all. I make no estimate of my library, because if it please God that you should make use of the books in pursuing my course, they would be of more value to you than any sum that could be raised by dispersing them.

It is fitting that you should bear all this in mind; but not for discouragement. Your prospects, God be thanked, are better than if you were heir to a large estate—far better for your moral and intellectual nature, your real welfare, your happiness here and hereafter. God bless you, my dear Cuthbert!—Your affectionate Father,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

267. To the Rev. Neville White

Buckland, near Lymington, Hampshire, Nov. 18, 1838.

My dear Neville,—You will be glad to hear that our expedition to France proved in all respects as profitable and agreeable as we could have wished it to be. We were six in number: Kenyon, a very old acquaintance of mine, whom you may possibly have met at my brother's; H. C. Robinson, who has more than once been a fellow traveller with Wordsworth; Capt. Jones, of the navy, an intimate friend of Kenyon's; Cuthbert, and myself. We engaged two carriages at Calais for the journey, and travelled post, the only mode of travelling by which we could regulate our movements according to our own convenience, take what direction seemed best to ourselves, and remain as long or as short a time at any place as we pleased. These advantages are well worth the additional expense, which indeed was not considerable, not having exceeded ten pounds per week each, everything included. You will see by my journal when I visit you next that I was not idle upon this journey, though less constantly industrious than I have been in former years.

I derived from the journey all the benefit that I had hoped for, and am at this time, thank God, in good health, free from all ailments, and in a proper condition for ascending Skiddaw, whenever Skiddaw shall be in a proper condition to be ascended. Winter seems now to be setting in, and I have a long journey before me, at a most unfavourable season. The course which I purpose taking, if nothing should occur to disarrange my plans, will be to leave this place on the 3rd of December, and make my way from Southampton to Brighton, that I may pass a week with my daughter Edith, if she is in a condition to receive me; but of this I am sorry to say there appears to be some doubt, for I learn from one of her sisters that she is required to pass most part of the day upon the sofa. It must

depend upon her therefore whether I make my visit to her now, or defer it till she may be in a more comfortable state. I can only say with certainty—that is with such certainty as the uncertain condition of human life allows us to presume upon—that whether I go to her at this time or not, my next stage will be from Brighton to London, by which road I can avoid the railways. My stay in London will not exceed a week, and indeed I should not have taken London in my way, had it not been that my old friend Bedford is in a very precarious, not to say dangerous, state of health. From London I purpose going by the Shrewsbury mail to pass two or three days with my old schoolfellow, Wynn, who has not long since lost his wife. I shall find him either at Wynnstay or at Llangedwyn, which is his own place of abode, and then I shall proceed with all convenient speed to Keswick, where I hope to arrive before Christmas.

Thus much concerning my intended movements. But I have something of more moment to communicate, which I should feel myself wanting in friendship if I did not impart to you, or if I left you to become acquainted with it by hearsay, or by any other channel than a direct communication from myself. Know, then, that I have formed an engagement with Miss Bowles, and, if it please God that all continue well with us, the marriage is to take place in the spring. We have been acquainted more than twenty years, and that acquaintance had matured into friendship at a time when no possibility that it might ever proceed further could have been looked to on either part.

Generally speaking, I believe a second marriage will be found to be either the wisest or the weakest action of a man's life. A weak action it must be, if engaged in with any precipitance, or if there be any unseemly disproportion of age, or any circumstances on either part from which any other motives than those of mutual and well-founded esteem could be inferred. I am in my sixty-fifth year, Caroline Bowles in her fifty-second. We have long been in constant correspondence. No

two persons could know each other better than we have long done; and I do not think it possible that any persons could be better suited to each other in every point of importance. As regards the prudentials of such an engagement, there will be additional means more than equal to any additional expenditure. But what is of far greater importance, I shall have for my constant companion one who will render my fireside cheerful, and save me from that forlorn feeling against which even my spirits, buoyant as they are by constitution, might not always have been able to bear up. My household will soon consist of only my daughter Kate, and Mrs. Lovell; for Bertha is about to unite herself with my cousin Herbert Hill, I know not how soon. I have provided therefore for Kate's comfort almost in as great a degree as for my own.

Upon this subject I have only to add that my daughters regard it with that proper feeling which you, I am sure, will give them credit for. They know that what is likely to be for my happiness is likely to be for theirs; and so well aware of the suitableness of the engagement was Mrs. Warter, the only one who could properly be said to know Miss Bowles personally, that when I wrote to her upon the subject, she said she must tell me that she had prophesied it, and that it had relieved her from the painful apprehension that I might be left alone.

God bless you, my dear Neville. I cannot enter upon ordinary matters after having entered so much at large upon what concerns me so nearly. Make my kindest regards to Mrs. White and your whole flock. I will not forget your daughter's album, nor the autograph for Mr. Utting. Tell me your daughter's Christian name in your next, which it will be good enough to make use of, if, as I hope, I should be able to introduce it with good effect.—Believe me always, Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

268. To John May

Buckland, July 6, 1839.

My dear John May,—Nothing has ailed me, except several attacks of the influenza, which are so common that one hardly thinks of mentioning them, especially as I have not had any of the worst symptoms; indeed it was not till yesterday that the cough became troublesome, and already it has wellnigh ceased to be so. It is just a matter of prudence not to expose myself to bright sunshine, but to keep house quietly as long as the epidemic continues. There is no privation in this. I have books enough here to employ myself; and I have not only one of the best companions, but one of the truest helpmates that man could be blest with, and whom I had regarded among my most intimate friends for more than twenty years,—how many more my memory will not enable me to ascertain. It will be a great satisfaction for me to introduce you to her. My old friends are falling fast around me, or bearing signs of increasing debility which cannot be misunderstood. Every year lessens their number now, and in losing Bedford I seem to have lost part of myself. Our intimacy commenced in 1791, and when I happened to be in London no day elapsed in which I did not see him. Every letter that I received from him has been carefully preserved, and all that he received from me have been preserved and arranged with the same care; it would surprise you to see such an accumulation. My intercourse with Wynn has been of forty-eight years' continuance; and with you it has been uninterrupted since we met at Lisbon in 1795.

You may fairly infer that I am in good heart and hope for the works which I hope to complete, when I tell you that as soon as we are settled at Keswick I shall resolutely begin upon the *History of Portugal*, as a duty which I owe to my uncle's memory. Half the labour I consider as done. But I have long since found the advantage of doing more than one thing

at a time, and the *History of the Monastic Orders* is the other thing to which I shall set to with hearty goodwill. Both these are works of great pith and moment; and I have a review of Sir Thomas Browne's works upon the stocks, and a volume of the *Lives of the Admirals*, or *Naval History*, whichever you please to call them. These minor affairs will supply Cuthbert's college expenses, and carry him through his course at Oxford. You have thus, my dear old friend, a pretty full account of my proceedings. God bless you.—Yours, most affectionately, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

NOTES

N.B.—In the references in these notes, 'Life'=*The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey* (edited by his son, Cuthbert Southey, 6 vols., 1849–50); 'Warter'=*Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey* (edited by J. W. Warter, 4 vols., 1856).

LETTER 1, p. 1. *G. C. Bedford* was one of Southey's Westminster school-fellows and the closest of all his friends. They first met in 1788, and their friendship lasted without a break from 1790 until Bedford's death in 1839.

LETTER 2, p. 3. *Robert Lovel* (or *Lovell*, 1770 ?–96) was the son of a Quaker. He published a joint volume of poems with Southey in 1794, under the title *Poems by Bion and Moschus*. In the same year he married Mary Fricker, whose sisters, Sarah and Edith, subsequently married S. T. Coleridge and Southey respectively. Lovel was one of the moving spirits in the scheme of Pantisocracy. He died of a fever in April 1796. Mrs. Lovel lived in Southey's family during his lifetime, and afterwards, until her death, with his daughter Katharine.

LETTER 3, p. 6. *Poor Shadrack*: Shadrack Weekes, Miss Tyler's serving-man. He and Southey had been companions together as boys at Bath. Coleridge refers to his adhesion to the plan of Pantisocracy with characteristic enthusiasm. SHAD GOES WITH US: HE IS MY BROTHER! he wrote in expressive capitals to Southey on September 18, 1794.

LETTER 5, p. 8. *C. W. W. Wynn* (1775–1850) was a school-friend of Southey at Westminster. For some ten years (from the last quarter of 1796 to 1807) he made Southey an allowance of £160 per annum. He entered Parliament in 1797, and sat for Montgomeryshire continuously from 1799 till his death. He was President of the Board of Control, 1822–8, Privy Councillor, 1822, Secretary at War, 1830–1, and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1834–5.

LETTER 6, p. 12. Southey first made the acquaintance of John May at Lisbon in 1795–6, and so began a life-long friendship.

LETTER 14, p. 36. *Charles Danvers* was one of the most intimate of Southey's early friends, and corresponded with him until his death in 1814. In a letter to John May of December 10, 1803, Southey speaks of 'Danvers, who, God bless him! is the friend of all who want a friend, and has as excellent an heart as God ever made to show us what a human heart can be' (Warter, i. x).

Poor Peggy. Margaret Hill was Southey's favourite cousin. He appears himself to have defrayed the expenses of her illness, which lasted for more than a year (Warter, i. 164). She died of consumption not long after Southey's return from Portugal in 1801.

LETTER 15, p. 42. *The Rev. Peter Elmsley* (1773–1825) was Southey's school-fellow at Westminster. He was Principal of St. Alban Hall, Oxford, and Camden Professor of Ancient History, 1823–5. He published critical editions of several plays of Sophocles and Euripides. Southey dedicated to him *The Book of the Church.*

LETTER 16, p. 44. *William Taylor* of Norwich (1765–1836) was a voluminous writer, and did much to popularize German literature in England. His chief work was an *Historic Survey of German Poetry*, 1828–30. Southey became intimate with him in 1798, and placed his younger brother Henry under his supervision while the latter was studying surgery at Norwich. For an account of Taylor's character see Letter 160.

LETTER 19, p. 50. *John Rickman* (1771–1840) was an eminent statistician, for many years Clerk-Assistant at the House of Commons, and author of the system for taking the census of the population. He was a close friend of Lamb as well as of Southey, with whom he became acquainted in 1797. A description of his manners and appearance will be found in Letter 69.

LETTER 20, p. 54. *George Burnett* (1766 ?–1811) was a friend of Southey at Balliol, and one of the supporters of Pantisocracy. His erratic disposition made his life 'a series of unsuccessful attempts in many professions'. For the last two years of his life his friends and relations saw

and heard nothing of him, and he died in the Marylebone Infirmary in February 1811.

LETTER 22, p. 57. *Robert Bloomfield* (1766–1823), a poetical shoemaker, achieved a great success with his 'Farmer's Boy', published in 1800. Lamb, however, thought little of it, and held that it revealed 'a poor mind'. Bloomfield published several other volumes of verse, engaged in business as a bookseller and became bankrupt, and finally died in great poverty.

For *William Hayley* see note on Letter 180.

P. 58. *Mrs. Inchbald* (1753–1821), novelist, playwright, and actress, is chiefly famous for her romance, *A Simple Story*, published in 1791.

Henry Fuseli (1741–1825), painter and author, was a native of Zurich. He was Professor of Painting at the Academy, 1799–1825, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

John Flaxman (1755–1826), the celebrated sculptor and draughtsman.

W. L. Bowles (1762–1850), 'divine, poet, and antiquary,' brought himself into notice by publishing in 1789 *Fourteen Sonnets written chiefly on Picturesque Spots during a Journey*. Both Coleridge and Southey confessed themselves much influenced by his verse in the formation of their own poetical taste.

Walter Whiter (1758–1832), well known as a philologist, from 1797 to his death Rector of Hardingham, Norfolk.

Thomas Busby (1755–1838) obtained the degree of Mus. Doc. at Cambridge in 1801.

James Barry (1741–1806), historical painter, was Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy, 1782–99, but was expelled from the Academy in the latter year on account of his perpetual quarrels with his fellow academicians.

Moses. The pet name for Hartley Coleridge, then in his sixth year.

LETTER 23, p. 59. *The Iris* was a short-lived magazine (February 5, 1803—January 29, 1804), of which William Taylor was editor.

LETTER 30, p. 74. Southey made Miss Barker's acquaintance in Portugal in 1800. She subsequently settled at Keswick, and was the Bhow Begum of *The Doctor*, &c. She married a Mr. Slade, and died in France about 1850.

LETTER 35, p. 88. *Sharon Turner* (1768–1847), the historian, published his chief work, a *History of England from the earliest period to the Norman Conquest*, 1799–1805. It has been described as 'almost as complete a revelation in its way as the discoveries of Layard', owing to the use made in it of previously unexplored material. Turner published other historical works between 1805 and 1839; but these are of less importance and value. For *Richard Duppa* see note on Letter 54.

LETTER 39, p. 95. *Mrs. Wilson* was housekeeper to Mr. Jackson, the owner of Greta Hall, and after his death continued to live with the Southeys till the end of her days. She died in 1820.

LETTER 43, p. 104. *Don Manuel*: Southey was writing at this time *Letters from England by Don Manuel Espriella*, a supposed Spanish traveller.

LETTER 44, p. 106. *as full of profound mysteries as the Butler.* The Butler, Cuthbert Southey tells us, was a mythological personage, the grotesque creation of G. C. Bedford's imagination. 'The idea . . . was of a hero possessing the most extraordinary powers; with something like the combined qualities of Merlin, Gargantua and Kehama, to be biographized in a style compounded of those of Rabelais, Swift, Sterne, and Baron Münchausen' (*Life*, ii. 335).

LETTER 45, p. 107. *Nicholas Lightfoot* was a friend of Southey at Balliol. He subsequently took Orders and became Master of Crediton Grammar School. Though he and Southey corresponded with more or less regularity, they did not meet after their Oxford days until 1822, when Lightfoot paid a visit to Southey at Keswick. See Letter 165.

P. 108. *the round hole . . . opposite your door.* This allusion is explained by the following passage in a letter from Southey to Lightfoot dated April 24, 1807: 'I am quite as noisy as ever, and should take as much delight as ever in showering stones through the hole of the staircase against your room door, and hearing with what hearty good earnest "you fool!" was vociferated in indignation against me in return' (*Life*, iii. 84).

LETTER 46, p. 109. *John Southey.* An uncle of Southey's, a rich solicitor of Taunton.

LETTER 47, p. 111. *Neville White* was a brother of Henry Kirke White, whose *Remains* Southey was at this time editing for the benefit of the family. The acquaintance thus begun between Southey and Neville White ripened into a warm friendship.

LETTER 50, p. 116. This letter refers—as do one or two which follow—to the *Specimens of the Later English Poets*, which was edited by Southey in collaboration with G. C. Bedford.

LETTER 54, p. 126. *Richard Duppa* (1770–1831), artist and author, first made Southey's acquaintance in 1793. He was a voluminous writer, chiefly on botanical, artistic, and political topics, his chief work being the *Life and Literary Works of Michael Angelo Buonarotti*, 1806 (2nd ed., 1807). For Southey's estimate of him see Warter, ii. 20, 21, iv. 231.

LETTER 59, p. 139. Thomas Southey had recently been under the care of Southey's friend, John King, a surgeon at Bristol.

LETTER 61, p. 141. *in heaping together gold*: I have ventured to substitute 'heaping' for 'keeping', which is the reading given by Cuthbert Southey (*Life*, iii. 152), and, it would seem, a misprint.

LETTER 67, p. 154. *the Emperor of the Franks*: probably Charles Wynn, then M.P. for Montgomeryshire.

George I: probably George Dyer (1755–1841), the eccentric friend and correspondent of Charles Lamb, 'a compiler and editor and general worker for the booksellers.'

LETTER 70, p. 163. *Thomas Young* (1773–1829) was eminent as a physician, physicist, and Egyptologist, but chiefly famous for his writings on the theory of light.

LETTER 74, p. 170. Coleridge had written on October 20, 1809, to ask Southey to help him in connexion with *The Friend*, which he was then publishing. 'What I wish you to do for me,' he wrote, '. . . is, to look over the eight numbers, and to write a letter to *The Friend* in a lively style, chiefly urging, in a humorous manner, my Don Quixotism in expecting that the public will ever pretend to understand my lucubrations, or feel any interest in subjects of such sad and unkempt antiquity, and con-

trasting my style with the cementless periods of the modern Anglo-Gallican style, which not only are understood *beforehand*, but, being free from all connections of logic, all the hooks and eyes of intellectual memory, never oppress the mind by any after recollections, but, like civil visitors, stay a few moments, and leave the room quite free and open for the next comers. Something of this kind, I mean, that I may be able to answer it so as, in the answer, to state my own convictions at full on the nature of obscurity, &c. . . .' (*Life*, iii. 259, 260).

LETTER 80, p. 185. *Robert Gooch, M.D.* (1784–1830), became a friend of Henry Southey at Edinburgh University, and in his vacations studied German at Norwich with William Taylor. He became intimate with Southey at Keswick in 1811, and wrote the letters on Béguines and Nursing, printed in the appendix to Southey's *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society*.

LETTER 81, p. 186. *Samuel Whitbread* (1758–1815), M.P. for Bedford from 1790, was prominent throughout his career as a leader of the extreme peace-at-any-price party. Southey had administered to him a 'blistering plaister' in the pages of the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, and the *Edinburgh Review* had urged that this attack should be visited with a government prosecution. See *Life*, iii. 304, 323.

P. 187. *Blanco White* (1775–1841), after changing from a Roman Catholic priest into an agnostic, came to England from Spain in 1810 and took up journalism as a profession. He subsequently acted as a clergyman in the Church of England, and eventually became an Unitarian. He was a prolific writer, chiefly on theological subjects, and a contributor to the *Quarterly Review*. Southey was among his correspondents.

LETTER 82, p. 190. *Herbert Marsh* (1757–1839), Lady Margaret Professor at Cambridge from 1807, and successively Bishop of Llandaff and of Peterborough, earned the reputation of being 'the best pamphleteer of the day'. In 1812 he had published one of his most powerful pamphlets under the title, 'An Inquiry into the consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer Book with the Bible.' This was provoked by his defeat in his opposition to the formation of an auxiliary Bible Society at Cambridge.

LETTER 83, p. 192. *the old Frenchman*: Louis Dutens (1730–1812), historiographer to the king.

LETTER 84, p. 194. *no modern Government.* The text as printed by Warter reads 'the modern Government',—which, as the context shows, can hardly be what Southey wrote.

LETTER 85, p. 195. Spencer Perceval, then Prime Minister, was shot in the lobby of the House of Commons by a madman named Bellingham on May 11, 1812.

P. 198. *poor Herries*: John Charles Herries (1778–1855) became private secretary to Perceval in 1807. In 1811 he became commissary-in-chief, and was subsequently Financial Secretary to the Treasury, 1823–7, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1827–8, President of the Board of Trade, 1830, and Secretary at War, 1834–5.

LETTER 86, p. 199. *The Rev. Herbert Hill*, Student of Christ Church, and successively Chaplain to the British Factories at Porto and at Lisbon, was Southey's maternal uncle. He paid the expenses of Southey's education at Westminster and Oxford, and took him to Lisbon with him in 1795. He encouraged him to undertake the writing of a *History of Portugal*, and, until he himself returned to England in 1807, continued to furnish him with Spanish and Portuguese materials for that work. On his return to England Mr. Hill married, and held successively the livings of Staunton-on-Wye and Streatham. One of his sons, Herbert, married Bertha Southey in 1839, and edited Southey's *Oliver Newman: With other Poetical Remains* in 1845. Southey dedicated to his uncle's memory his *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society.*

LETTER 88, p. 205. *Dr. Bell*: Andrew Bell (1753–1832), founder of the Madras system of education, the distinctive feature of which was the employment of monitors and pupil-teachers. This system he first introduced into the Madras Male Orphan Asylum, and subsequently developed and extended in England. He was involved in a controversy as to whether he or Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, was the originator of the plan. Bell became superintendent of the National Society, and did much to promote the cause of elementary education in England and Wales. He desired Southey to write his *Life*, but Southey himself was only able to write the first volume before the failure

of his mental powers; the second and third volumes were written by Cuthbert Southey. See Letter 225.

LETTER 89, p. 208. *Coleridge's tragedy.* Coleridge's *Remorse*, a recast of *Osorio*, which had been rejected by Sheridan in 1797, was first performed at Drury Lane, January 23, 1813, and ran for twenty nights.

LETTER 98, p. 225. *James White* was a younger brother of Henry Kirke and Neville White.

LETTER 104, p. 236. *Lamb's Review.* Lamb's only contribution to the *Quarterly Review* was a review of *The Excursion*, printed in the number for October 1814. 'Whatever inadequateness it had to its subject,' he told Wordsworth, 'it was in point of composition the prettiest piece of prose I ever writ'; and he compared Gifford's alterations of his manuscript to pulling out the eyes and leaving only the bleeding sockets.

LETTER 106, p. 238. *James Dusautoy* was a young man who had consulted Southey as to the publication of some pieces of poetry and as to his prospects in literature. He entered at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and seemed likely to have a distinguished career before him, but died of a fever in 1815. See *Life*, iv. 19–24.

P. 240. *the new edition of his poems.* The first collective edition of Wordsworth's poems was published in March 1815.

LETTER 119, p. 263. *Chauncey Hare Townshend* (1798–1868) graduated at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and won the Chancellor's medal for a poem on *Jerusalem* in 1817. Encouraged by Southey, he published a volume of *Poems* in 1821. He took holy orders, but ill-health disabled him early from active work as a clergyman. He published two other volumes of poetry—in 1851 and 1859—besides other works.

LETTER 122, p. 268. *Robert Owen* (1771–1858), socialist and philanthropist, endeavoured to put into practice his own views of society at New Lanark, where he had the chief interest in some cotton mills, and did much for the education of the children of the employees.

LETTER 125, p. 274. Southey succeeded through the help of Samuel Rogers in removing the pecuniary diffi-

culties which stood in Herbert Knowles' way, but the latter died before he could proceed to the University.

LETTER 128, p. 277. *Wat Tyler.* The piratical publication of this play early in 1817 brought Southey into greater notoriety than any other event in his life. The history of the play itself and of its publication is sufficiently set forth in Letter 128. How little importance Southey himself had attached to *Wat Tyler* at the time at which it was written may be judged from the fact that Cuthbert Southey, in preparing his father's biography, found no reference to the play in all the early letters which passed through his hands. There can be little doubt that the publication of *Wat Tyler* was due to a double motive. On the one hand, it offered a ready means of holding its author up to obloquy as a turncoat. The change which had taken place in Southey's religious and political opinions was known to all. And the opportunity was not to be lost of retaliating for the blows which he had struck in his writings for many years past at the views and policy of Whigs and Radicals, more particularly as shown in their denunciation of the war with Buonaparte. On the other hand, the play was itself calculated to foment the spirit of republicanism and unrest which had been roused in a large section of the people of this country by the poverty and misery consequent upon a long and exhausting war. There was a piquancy in the thought of spreading Jacobin opinions by means of the writings of the Tory Laureate. The publishers must have made a large profit by their unscrupulous action, even though the statement that 60,000 copies of the play were sold should be exaggerated. Southey applied to the Court of Chancery for an injunction to restrain the publication. But Lord Eldon refused the application on the ground that, as the work was calculated to do an injury to society, the author could not reclaim his property in it.

The subject of this play and its authorship was twice brought forward in Parliament; once by Brougham, and once by William Smith, member for Norwich. This latter gentleman rose in his place in the House of Commons on March 14, 1817, armed with the *Quarterly Review* in one pocket and *Wat Tyler* in the other, and read contrasted extracts from each, in order to illustrate what he termed 'the settled and determined malignity of a rene-

gado'. He was answered on the spot by C. W. W. Wynn; and William Wilberforce wrote shortly afterwards to explain to Southey why he had not spoken in his defence, saying that 'he felt as if he had to clear his own character from a stain till he assured him that he was not in the house at the time'. Coleridge also vindicated his friend in the columns of *The Courier*. Southey himself replied to Smith's attack in a letter published in pamphlet form. Of this reply Walter Scott wrote to him, 'I wish you joy of your triumphant answer to that coarse-minded William Smith. He deserved all he has got, and, to say the truth, you do not spare him, and have no cause. . . . Enough of this gentleman, who I think will not walk out of the round again to slander the conduct of individuals' (Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, chap. xxxviii). Southey's letter was reprinted in his *Essays Moral and Political*, and is also to be found in the Appendix to vol. iv of his *Life and Correspondence*.

Letter 133, p. 287. *Caroline Bowles* (1786–1854) was the daughter of a Captain Charles Bowles, in the service of the East India Company. After the death of her parents she continued to live at their home at Buckland, near Lymington. Owing to loss of property, due to the dishonesty of a guardian, her means were slender; and on April 25, 1818, she wrote to Southey, to whom she was a complete stranger, to ask his opinion of a manuscript poem, subsequently published by Longman under the title of 'Ellen Fitzarthur'. The correspondence thus begun proved to be the opening of a warm friendship between Caroline Bowles and Southey, which culminated in their marriage in 1839. In contracting this second marriage Southey took a step which was natural but disastrous. Within three months the hopeless failure of his intellect became apparent. The situation was most difficult both for Mrs. Southey and for her step-children, and the relations between them were strained and unhappy. She remained, however, on terms of intimate friendship with Southey's eldest daughter, Edith, and her husband, the Rev. J. W. Warter. When Southey died in 1843, she returned to her old home at Buckland, and lived there till her death. Before her marriage she brought out several volumes of prose and verse, of which *Chapters on Churchyards* and *The Birthday* are the most notable, and in 1847 she published the fragment of what was to have

been a joint poem by Southey and herself on *Robin Hood*, together with other verses.

LETTER 135, p. 292. I have introduced the name Chauncey Townshend in brackets, as it is clear from a comparison of this letter with a letter printed by Warter, iii. 347, that he is the young man to whom Southey here refers. In printing this letter in his father's *Life and Correspondence* Cuthbert Southey conceals the name under the initial C.

LETTER 138, p. 298. The person to whom this letter was addressed had written two anonymous letters to Southey in 1819, asking him to take charge of his papers after his death, and Southey had replied under the impression that his correspondent was 'in the last stage of some mortal disease'. Southey heard nothing more until January 1820, when he learnt that his correspondent had committed suicide. An examination of the papers left for his inspection proved beyond doubt that their author had been insane.

LETTER 141, p. 304. *Allan Cunningham* (1784–1842) was a prolific writer, both in prose and verse. He is now chiefly remembered as the author of the famous song 'A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea'.

LETTER 142, p. 306. The lines in *Don Juan* referred to in this letter will be found in Canto I, stanza ccv:

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope;
Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey;
Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,
The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthy.

LETTER 150, p. 319. This letter was printed by Professor Dowden, together with Letters 151, 153, and 154, and an earlier note from Shelley to Southey not reprinted in the present volume, in an Appendix to *The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles*. In reading these letters 'it is easy', as Professor Dowden observes, 'for the lover of Southey to be unjust to Shelley, and easy for the lover of Shelley to misinterpret Southey. . . . The central question at issue is this (and perhaps the answer to it is not hard to find): "How far did the *principles* held by Shelley open a way for conduct which led, directly or indirectly, to the ruin of one whom Shelley was bound to protect from others and from herself?" Southey

certainly erred in supposing that Shelley's *character* had deteriorated since 1812; but knowing as much and as little as he did, Southey's error was inevitable' (E. Dowden, *op. cit.*, pp. xi. and xii).

LETTER 156, p. 333. *William Westall* (1781–1850), topographical painter and Associate of the Royal Academy. The drawings referred to in this letter were those subsequently engraved in Southey's *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society*. It is pleasant to know that Westall immediately acted on Southey's advice conveyed in this letter, and renewed his friendly intercourse with Nash. The latter died only a few weeks later (*Life*, v. 51).

LETTER 159, p. 338. The inventress of the Lingo-Grande (as Southey elsewhere calls her language, Warter, iii. 359) was Mrs. Coleridge.

LETTER 162, p. 344. *Bernard Barton* (1784–1849), the Quaker poet, was a friend of Southey and Lamb and other literary men of the day. His daughter and only child married Edward FitzGerald, who wrote a short biography of his father-in-law, prefixed to an edition of Barton's poems in 1849. The volume alluded to in this letter is Barton's *Napoleon and Other Poems*, published in 1822, with a dedication to George IV.

LETTER 163, p. 346. *the satanic school of poetry*. See the Preface to Southey's *Vision of Judgement*. The phrase had stung Byron into making a bitter personal attack upon Southey, with an incidental and insolent reference to Landor, in the Preface to his own *Vision of Judgement*.

LETTER 166, p. 350. *The General*: General Peachey, who lived on Vicar's Island in Derwentwater.

LETTER 171, p. 359. *George Ticknor* (1791–1871) was one of the first distinguished American men of letters. His chief work, the *History of Spanish Literature*, was published in 1849.

LETTER 172, p. 362. All that was ever written of the poem on *Robin Hood* was published by Caroline Southey in 1847, under the title *Robin Hood: A Fragment. By the late Robert Southey and Caroline Southey. With other Fragments and Poems by R. S. and C. S.* Of the two Parts, only Part I was written by Southey.

LETTER 173, p. 363. This and the following letter mark

the close of the misunderstanding which had arisen between Lamb and Southey as a result of the latter's allusion to the *Essays of Elia* in the *Quarterly Review*. In January, 1823, there appeared in the *Quarterly* an article by Southey on Bishop Gregoire and the progress of Deism in France. In this article Southey referred to Elia's Essays as 'a book which wants only a sounder religious feeling to be as delightful as it is original'; and proceeded to illustrate the evil consequences of bringing up children without religious training by quoting from the essay on *Witches and other Night Fears* Lamb's account of the nervous terrors of 'dear little T. H.'—whom every one knew to be Leigh Hunt's son, Thornton. Southey had only intended, while pointing a moral, to direct attention to the merits of his friend's book. But his way of setting about it had certainly been unfortunate. He had originally written 'a saner religious feeling'; then, remembering Lamb's family history, had hastily substituted the word 'sounder', meaning to recast the sentence when the proof reached him (see *Life*, vi. 288). For some reason he never received a proof, and thus had no opportunity of revising what he had written. Lamb, who had had previous cause to complain of the *Quarterly Review*, though not of anything which Southey had written in its pages, was deeply hurt. He was annoyed by what he felt to be a derogatory and possibly damaging reference to the *Essays of Elia*; and he strongly resented the fact that his own writings should have been used as a text for an attack on his friends. He replied by publishing in the *London Magazine* for October, 1823, a *Letter of Elia to Robert Southey, Esq.* The concluding paragraphs of this letter were subsequently reprinted in the second series of *Elia* under the title of 'The Tombs in the Abbey'. The letter in which Southey seeks reconciliation and Lamb's penitent reply are as honourable to both the friends as they are eminently characteristic. For a full account of the misunderstanding (for controversy is far too grave a word) see Canon Ainger's *Charles Lamb* in the English Men of Letters Series, pp. 129–40.

LETTER 174, p. 364. *I do not think your handwriting at all like —— 's.* In his letter to the *London Magazine* Lamb had said that he had often opened letters from Leigh Hunt under the impression that they were from Southey, so great was the similarity of their handwriting.

LETTER 180, p. 376. *Henry (afterwards Sir Henry) Taylor* (1800–1886), the author of *Philip Van Artevelde*, first made Southey's acquaintance in 1823. The acquaintance ripened into warm friendship, and Taylor not only became a constant correspondent, but also accompanied Southey on his continental tours in 1825 and 1826.

P. 377. *William Hayley* (1745–1820) was offered and declined the Laureateship on Warton's death in 1790. Southey (who wrote of him, 'Everything about that man is good, except his poetry') reviewed his *Memoirs* in No. LXII of the *Quarterly Review*. See Letter 22.

LETTER 181, p. 377. *Mrs. Hughes* was wife of Thomas Hughes, D.D., Clerk of the Closet to George III and George IV, Vicar of Uffington, Berkshire, and Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral. She was an early and intimate friend of Sir Walter Scott, who refers to her in a letter to Southey of July 8, 1824, as 'my clever, active, bustling friend Mrs. Hughes' (Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, chap. lx).

LETTER 185, p. 384. In J. W. Warter's *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey* Mrs. Opie's name is here left a blank: but there is no longer any reason for not inserting it. *Amelia Opie* (1769–1853), novelist and poet, married John Opie, the painter, in 1798. On his death in 1807 she returned to live with her father at Norwich. There she fell under the influence of Joseph John Gurney (her 'Quaker Abelard'), began to attend the Friends' religious services in 1814, and was formally received into the Society in 1825.

The verses referred to in this letter are those which Mrs. Opie wrote in Edith May Southey's album on the occasion of Southey leaving Norwich on January 30, 1824. Southey did not let his daughter forget the reference to her in the apostrophe to the

> famed Swan of the Derwent's fair tide
> With that elegant cygnet that floats by thy side.

See Warter, iii. 435.

LETTER 196, p. 410. *John Kenyon* (1784–1856), poet and philanthropist, made Southey's acquaintance through their common friend Thomas Poole of Nether Stowey, and was one of his travelling companions on his last foreign tour in 1838.

LETTER 201, p. 420. *Friend* [*Amelia*]: Mrs. Opie. Here,

as in Letter 185, the name has been filled in, where J. W. Warter had left a blank.

LETTER 203, p. 423. *Sir Robert Inglis* (1786–1855) is chiefly famous for having defeated Sir R. Peel in 1829 in the contest for the representation of Oxford University, which followed on Peel's admitting the necessity of Catholic Emancipation. Inglis continued to represent his University in Parliament as a confirmed Tory till he retired from public life in 1854.

LETTER 209, p. 435. *The verses which you sent Alaric Watts.* The verses are those 'To the Memory of Isabel Southey', subsequently published in *The Birthday.* Caroline Bowles had sent them to Watts, in answer to his application for some verses for *The Literary Souvenir,* under the title 'On the Death of a Young Lady'.

LETTER 211, p. 439. C. W. W. Wynn had held the office of President of the Board of Control with a seat in the Cabinet from January 1822 to February 1828. When the Duke of Wellington formed his administration in 1828 he obliged Wynn to give place to Lord Melville.

LETTER 216, p. 446. Southey's article on 'The Roman Catholic Question and Ireland', in No. 76 of the *Quarterly Review,* provoked a rejoinder from the Rev. R. Shannon in the shape of a pamphlet entitled 'An Address to the Clergy on behalf of the Roman Catholic Claims'. In this pamphlet Shannon expressed a confident hope that Southey was not the author of the *Quarterly* article, in which he detected an 'utterly inhuman' spirit towards Ireland and its Catholic population. He added that he had been several times in Southey's company more than twenty years previously, and 'remembered well the enthusiasm of his feelings in speaking of the wrongs and sufferings of Ireland, and the energy of language in which he expressed his ardent wishes for the restoration of Catholic rights. . . . The generous warmth of indignant feeling,' he proceeded, 'may easily be supposed to abate in the cooler temperature of an advancing age; but it is impossible that the moral sense should undergo so complete a transformation, except from causes which are liable to suspicion.' This passage was quoted in *The Times,* and made the text for a venomous attack upon Southey for having added 'another inconsistency to that long list of tergiversations and con-

flicting professions which have occurred in his transition from the Jacobin leveller of altars and thrones to the loyal and high church Poet Laureate'. Henry Taylor, who was himself in favour of Catholic Emancipation, wrote a long letter to *The Times* in Southey's defence, effectively exposing the absurdity and injustice of the invective which had been directed against him. 'I have searched the whole article through,' he wrote, 'and I know not where in it Mr. Shannon could find a trace of such [an inhuman] spirit, or a pretext for his charge.' How far the charge was deserved might be judged from such an extract from the article as the following: 'The Emperor Acbar bore upon his signet this saying—"I never saw any one lost upon a straight road." This is a straight road—to restrain treason, to punish sedition, to disregard clamour, and by every possible means to better the condition of the Irish peasantry, who are not more miserably ignorant than they are miserably oppressed. Give them employment in public works, bring the bogs into cultivation, facilitate for those who desire it the means of emigration. Extend the poor laws to Ireland; experience may teach us to guard against their abuse—they are benevolent, they are necessary, they are just. . . . Better their condition thus—educate the people, execute justice, and maintain peace. . . . Let everything be done that can relieve the poor—everything that can improve their condition physically, morally, intellectually, and religiously.' Well might Henry Taylor exclaim, 'As far as human feelings and not political opinions are in question, I know not by what spirit Mr. Shannon would desire this writer to have been actuated, nor do I know by what spirit any writer could have been actuated who could find "an inhuman spirit" in this!' Southey was much annoyed at Shannon's misrepresentation of his opinions based on a confused recollection of conversations held more than twenty years before, and addressed to him a courteous remonstrance. Without impugning his good faith, he pointed out that the statement about himself was quite inaccurate, and concluded by saying that he considered that Shannon owed him a public acknowledgment of this fact as amends for a public wrong. Shannon, however, persisted in his original statement, and declined to admit that he had done anything which demanded reparation. His correspondence with Southey was brought to a close by the letter here

printed; but Southey carried out his intention of publicly contradicting Shannon's allegations in the Preface to his *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society*. See *Life*, vi. 29–33.

LETTER 218, p. 451. The 'second series' (vols. iv and v) of Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* was published in 1829.

LETTER 222, p. 456. *Edward Quillinan* (1791–1851) lost his first wife in 1822, shortly after he had settled at Spring Cottage, between Rydal and Ambleside. In 1841 he married Wordsworth's daughter, Dorothy, who has been celebrated by her father, together with Edith May Southey and Sara Coleridge, in his poem 'The Triad'.

LETTER 225, p. 466. *the Howitts*: William Howitt (1792–1879) and Mary Howitt (1799–1888) were prolific miscellaneous authors, often writing in collaboration. An article in *The Times* said of them: 'Nothing that either of them wrote will live, but they were so industrious, so disinterested, so amiable, so devoted to the work of spreading good and innocent literature, that their names ought not to disappear unmourned.'

LETTER 226, p. 468. *Edward Moxon* (1801–58), verse-writer and publisher, married Lamb's adopted daughter, Emma Isola, in 1833. In 1832 he published, by subscription, the first collected edition of Leigh Hunt's poems.

LETTER 227, p. 469. *The Rev. John Wood Warter* (1806–1878), scholar and antiquary, was from 1830 to 1833 Chaplain to the British Embassy at Copenhagen. He married Edith May Southey (d. July 25, 1871) in 1834, having just previously been appointed to the vicarage of West Tarring, in Sussex, which he held till his death. He edited volumes vi and vii of Southey's *The Doctor, &c.*, and an edition of the whole work in one volume, 1848, the four series of Southey's *Commonplace Book*, 1849–51, and the important *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey* (four volumes, 1856).

LETTER 229, p. 472. *Mrs. Bray* (1790–1883) married as her second husband the Rev. Edward Atkyns Bray, Vicar of Tavistock. Between 1826 and 1874 she wrote, besides other works, a dozen or more novels, one of which, *The Talba, or The Moor of Portugal*, brought her into acquaintance with Southey. The most valuable of her works, *The Borders of the Tamar and the Tavy* (1836, 3 vols.), is written

in the form of a series of letters to Southey, and describes the legends and superstitions connected with the neighbourhood of Tavistock. Southey reviewed it in the *Quarterly Review*.

P. 474. *My letter concerning Lord Nugent*: George Nugent Grenville (1788–1850), younger son of the first Marquess of Buckingham, inherited through his mother the barony of Nugent of Carlanstown, in the peerage of Ireland, in 1813. In politics he was an extreme Whig. His *Memorials of John Hampden*, published in 1832, was unfavourably reviewed by Southey in the *Quarterly*. Lord Nugent replied to the review in a letter to John Murray, which in its turn provoked a further rejoinder from Southey.

P. 475. *Mary Colling* was a servant in Mrs. Bray's employ, who wrote verses.

Letter 230, p. 475. *one whose name I must not mention*: Lord Ashley, who took charge of M. T. Sadler's Bill for improving the conditions of work in factories after Sadler had lost his seat in Parliament in 1833. *Lord Ashley* (1801–1885) is better known as the Lord Shaftesbury who did more to improve the conditions of life for the working-classes in this country than any other man in the nineteenth century. Southey was in constant correspondence with him about this time, and warmly encouraged him in his philanthropic endeavours.

Letter 232, p. 478. *The books*. The first two volumes of *The Doctor, &c.* Cuthbert Southey tells us how, when these volumes arrived with the inscription 'From the Author' written in a disguised hand, Southey pushed them aside with well-simulated indifference—'Some novel. I suppose'; and how, after enjoying his son's mystification for some weeks, he came down one morning and told him that he thought he had a manuscript which he would value—and handed to him the manuscript of *The Doctor*. *The Doctor* had been begun as early as 1813, and had been written at odd moments, more as an amusement than anything else. As time passed, Southey turned to it more and more as a refuge from the sorrows which thickened upon him, and the book naturally assumed a graver and less buoyant tone. The best account of the genesis and growth of *The Doctor* will be found in Letters 248 and 250. See also *Life*, vi. 225–227.

LETTER 234, p. 480. This letter was sent without a signature, and transcribed by another hand, to a reading-party of undergraduates from Cambridge at that time staying in Keswick. Cuthbert Southey, in commenting on the circumstances, speaks of his father's 'abhorrence of all cruelty'. 'I have seen his cheek glow,' (he adds), 'and his eye darken and almost flash fire, when he chanced to witness anything of the kind, and heard him administer a rebuke which made the recipient tremble' (*Life*, vi. 236, 237).

LETTER 237, p. 485. *Davies*: Dr. Bell's secretary, who had been staying at Keswick and helping Southey in the preparation of Dr. Bell's *Life*.

LETTER 238, p. 486. The passage quoted at the end of this letter will be found in *The Doctor, &c.*, chap. xcvii.

LETTER 244, p. 494. *My letter to Brougham*: Southey had written to Brougham, then Lord Chancellor, on February 1, 1831, in reply to a long letter inquiring his opinion as to

'1st. Whether or not letters will gain by the more avowed and active encouragement of the Government? 2nd. In what way that encouragement can then most safely and beneficially be given them?' See *Life*, vi. 129–136.

LETTER 247, p. 496. *a very full account of Asgill.* See *The Doctor*, chapters clxxii, clxxiii. John Asgill (1659–1738) published in 1700 a pamphlet to prove that 'man may be translated into . . . eternal life without passing through death'. This pamphlet led to his expulsion from the Irish House of Commons in 1703 and from the English House of Commons in 1707, on the ground of blasphemy; and in each case it was ordered that the book should be burnt by the hangman. References to Asgill will be found in Coleridge's *Table Talk*, April 30, 1832, and May 15, 1833, and also in his *Literary Remains* (1836), ii. 390.

LETTER 248, p. 497. *The great word*: Aballiboozo-banganorribo. See *The Doctor, &c.*, interchapter ii and chapter cxlviii.

LETTER 250, p. 501. REVERNE. See *The Doctor, &c.*, interchapter xiii. *The Rev. John Miller* was a Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford. He won the Chancellor's Prize for a Latin Essay in 1810, and was Bampton Lecturer in

1817, the subject of his lectures being 'The Divine Authority of Holy Scripture asserted, from its Adaptation to the Real State of Human Nature'.

LETTER 254, p. 508. Mrs. Gaskell tells us in her *Life of Charlotte Brontë*, chap. viii, how the Brontë sisters 'had attempted to write poetry, and had a modest confidence that they had achieved a tolerable success. But they knew that they might deceive themselves, and that sisters' judgements of each other's productions were likely to be too partial to be depended upon. So Charlotte, as the eldest, resolved to write to Southey'. Her letter was dispatched on December 29, 1836.

LETTER 257, p. 513. *Cottle's book*: *Early Recollections, chiefly relating to Samuel Taylor Coleridge*—published in 1837.

Talfourd's *Letters of Charles Lamb, with a Sketch of his Life* appeared in 1837. It was the earliest biography of Lamb.

LETTER 258, p. 515. *The first volume of my poems*: i. e. of the collective edition, in ten volumes, published by Longman in 1837–8.

LETTER 259, p. 517. *to be doing something else*: Warter prints in a note the following amusing description of Wynn from an unpublished letter to Dr. H. H. Southey of February 3, 1813: 'Wynn is in Wales; and wherever he is, he is always, as Elmsley most happily said of him at Oxford—*doing something else*. He is always in that state of bother and confusion which you would expect in a man who, before he was married, used to begin doing half a hundred things before he put his breeches on, and who used to have books, pen, ink, and paper, breeches, gallowses, neck cloth, and rolls and butter, all upon the breakfast table at the same time' (Warter, iv. 530).

LETTER 260, p. 519. *Mrs. Hodson* (1778–1852) published several volumes of poems, and in 1832 dedicated to Southey her last work, *The Lives of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa and Francisco Pizarro, From the Spanish of Don Manuel Josef Quintana*.

The opening sentences of this letter refer to the failure of Baldwin and Cradock, the publishers of Southey's *Life and Works of Cowper*. In the event Southey actually suffered a loss of £250 from this cause (*Life*, vi. 341).

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